University of Alberta

Good for *all* Students: A Foucauldian Interrogation of Teachers' Discourse of Inclusion

by

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Abstract

Policies of Inclusion have been in place for nearly a quarter of a century. However, these policies have not always translated into inclusive practices in schools and classrooms. Prior studies of teacher attitudes have shown that teachers are generally in favour of inclusion as a policy, but that their attitudes are less positive in practice. Most of the research conducted in the past has used Likert-type scales to measure teacher attitudes about inclusion.

This study is an interrogation of teacher attitudes of inclusion from a Foucauldian perspective, using Foucault's "Box of Tools" as methodology to frame the analysis, and using interpretive inquiry as the method of data analysis. Additionally, an historical overview of the discourse of inclusion reveals the accepted academic discourses, while an examination of official Alberta Education policy documents frame the official discourse(s) of inclusion in Alberta.

Findings were consistent with past research on teacher attitudes and indicated that the teachers' attitudes about inclusion were mostly mixed. The Foucauldian-framed analysis revealed that the discourse of Special Education remains dominant amongst teachers and that the Foucauldian notions of Otherness, normalization and the Gaze are very much part of the teachers' discourse of inclusion. To fully support inclusive practices, future policy initiatives should consider methods of meeting students' needs by moving away from a focus on special education needs and moving toward meeting all students' needs in an inclusive environment.

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Dedication

To Robert, for your unfaltering love and support.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The practice of including children with special education needs in the general classroom has been an issue of constant debate since it became part of the educational discourse nearly a quarter of a century ago. Previously, students with special education needs were segregated from other students both in the classroom and elsewhere in the community. More recently, there has been a shift to including all students in the regular classroom. Currently across Canada, provincial Ministries of Education recommend, on the whole, educating students in inclusive environments as a first placement option (e.g., Alberta Learning, 2004; MacKay, 2006). Questions about the extent to which students with special education needs have been truly "included" have increased as policy currents have changed.

Although discussions related to inclusion have been taking place for over twenty years, they have tended to focus on the physical and practical notions of the concept such as placement, seating and scheduling, with less attention given to quality of instruction provided, the effectiveness of programming or the achievement of students with special education needs (Slee, 1993). Even though similar inclusion policies exist throughout the country, the practical implementation of inclusion has differed significantly by classroom, school, district and province (Bunch, Lupart & Brown, 1997; Hutchinson, 2002; Edmunds, 2003).

Given the policy shift from segregation to inclusion in most school jurisdictions in Alberta and elsewhere, regular (i.e. non-specialized) classroom teachers have increasingly faced the task of teaching heterogeneous groups of students. These teachers have brought to the task varying levels of knowledge and

supports that enable them to meet the needs of all their students (Winzer, 1998). Undoubtedly, the success or failure of inclusive practices is contingent upon teacher attitudes with regards to inclusion, and the ways that their attitudes impact their teaching methods.

Several studies have shown that the attitudes of teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom are an important part of the success of this practice (Bunch et al., 1997; Villa, Thousand, Meyers, & Nevin, 1996; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998; Winzer, 1998; Andrews & Lupart, 2000). Such attitudes appear to be influenced by teachers' theoretical and practical knowledge of inclusion. Despite the trend toward more inclusive practices, many studies have shown that teachers do not feel equipped to deal with all their students, particularly those with significant special education needs (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Edmunds, 1998; 2003; Farrell, 2004; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). These studies have revealed the enduring incongruity between teachers' theoretical beliefs and their practice since the inception of inclusion as an educational policy.

Despite the continued resistance of some teachers to inclusive practices, many education policy documents now incorporate a clear message with regards to inclusive placement and practices in schools and classrooms. For example, Alberta Education's *Standards for Special Education, Amended 2004* states: "educating students with special education needs in inclusive settings is the first placement option to be considered by school boards. Inclusion [refers to] specially designed instruction and support for students with special education needs in regular classrooms and neighbourhood schools." Given that the *Standards* document is the primary policy

document for teachers and schools who must educate students with special education needs, the above statement sends a clear message that Alberta's policy is to educate students with special education needs in the regular classroom.

While the academic and policy discourses on this topic are strongly supportive of inclusion, this support does not translate into practice in the way that it might have been envisioned by academics and policy-makers (Slee, 2006). That is, alignment between the dominant discourse of inclusion and the practice thereof is not always congruent. While on the surface, teacher discourse supports inclusion in theory, teacher practice in the classroom is not always reflective of this support. Some of this incongruence between the teachers' discourse and their practice may be attributed to some or all of the following factors: (a) teachers lack the necessary knowledge to properly implement inclusion, (b) time and resources are not sufficient to make successful inclusion possible, and (c) teachers' discourse on inclusion represents not their own personal beliefs on inclusion, but rather a reiteration of what is known to be the dominant discourse. In other words, power relations, be they conscious or unconscious, may come into play when teachers are reporting their feelings about inclusion.

So, if achieving successful inclusion is the ultimate goal that the education system should be working toward, it is important that we recognize what underlies and makes up the discourse of inclusion by taking into account its reproduction by those whose beliefs and attitudes do not reflect inclusive education policies in practice. If teachers merely support the dominant discourse of inclusion in theory, then the key to

improving the success of inclusion in practice is to gain a better understanding of the underlying reasons for the divergence between the theory and the practice.

As noted by Skrtic (1995), one of the most important themes running through the work of Michel Foucault is that to understand a social institution, one must consider it from its dark side, from the perspective of the "professions and institutional practices that emerge to contain its failures" (p. xv). The incongruity between teachers' discourse and their practice may be the so-called dark side of inclusion. The use of Foucauldian methodology can allow us to gain a better understanding of this puzzling state in which inclusion finds itself. Foucauldian methodology provides a mechanism for looking at inclusion from a critical perspective, within and through the historical context from which it arose.

Foucault's writings have undoubtedly had more than considerable influence on postmodern thought (Best & Kellner, 1991). In addition to having had a profound impact on philosophy and critical theory, Foucault's methods have been used in various other fields of study, including developmental psychology (Walkerdine, 1988), psychology (Hook, 2007), political science (Brass, 2000) and cultural studies (Bratich, Packer & McCarthy, 2003) amongst others, and have been a popular tool for analyzing various issues in education, including school structure (McNeil, 1988). More recently, Foucauldian methodologies have been used as an analytical tool in the field of disabilities and inclusion (e.g., Allan, 1999; Tremain, 2005). Many prominent authors in the field of inclusion have been influenced by Foucault's work, such as Skrtic (1995), Graham & Slee (2008) and Allan (1996;1999).

The current study builds upon the recent literature in the area of the discourse of inclusion in order to further explicate the dynamic and complex power relationships that pervade teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, how these relate to the dominant discourse and how teachers create their own discourse independent of that held by academics and policy-makers. More specifically, Foulcauldian methodology provides important tools that will aid in gaining a clearer understanding of the discontinuity between teachers' attitudes and actions, as a function of power relations that come into play and as a function of the historical events that have helped to form the attitudes held by teachers.

Furthermore, the present study investigates the relationship between teachers' discourse and their practice of including students with special education needs, particularly students with cognitive disabilities, within the historical and current contexts of inclusion policies and mandated practices in Alberta. This is a multi-disciplinary study that, although focused on teachers of students with disabilities, includes philosophical and historical discussions crucial to the methodology used in the study.

In the following sections, the theoretical framework upon which this research is based will be presented first, followed by the rationale for the study, purpose of the study, and the questions that guided the research.

Theoretical Framework

> I would like my books to be a kind of tool-box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area…I would like the little volume that I want to write on disciplinary systems to be useful to an educator, a warden, a magistrate, a conscientious objector. I don't write for an audience, I write for users, not readers (Foucault, 1977, p. 205).

The task of this research is to critically analyze teachers' discourse of inclusion in the context of other discourses of inclusion. This task must necessarily begin by framing the project with a coherent theory of discourse that will work as the thread that links the various parts of the inquiry. The critical theoretical framework for this study will be Foucault's theories of discourse and of power/knowledge, in addition to his other techniques and tools for analyzing data and discourse. At the heart of a Foucauldian perspective is a focus on discourse as a method for making meaning. This making of meaning is interrogated through the use of elements of Foucault's methodologies of archaeology and genealogy, which provide a solid structure upon which to build a foundation for understanding teachers' discourse of inclusion. The use of Foucault's theories and methods as a framework makes it possible to reveal, and allows for a deeper comprehension of, the mechanisms of power that come into play in teachers' discursive formations; and, furthermore, enables analysis of how their discursive statements relate to, and shape, the overarching discourse of inclusion.

Foucault's Discourse

Using the Foucauldian notion of discourse as a system of meaning that extends beyond a direct interpretation of words and language allows for a critical examination of practices, power, and the complexity of the historical, social and professional context in which they exist. A Foucauldian analysis of discourse and power is useful in that it can help us to think about how we know what we know (i.e. epistemological beliefs), where this knowledge originates, how it is produced and which circumstances allow for its production; whose interests might be served by this knowledge and how it is possible to think differently in order to "be able to trace the way that information that we accept as 'true' is kept in that privileged position" (Mills, 2003, p. 66). Through this type of investigation and by undertaking a critical approach to analyzing the discourse of inclusion, a new perspective on teachers' attitudes toward and practices of inclusion may be allowed to emerge.

Prior to Foucault, the concept of *discourse* had been mainly the domain of linguists (Mills, 2003, p. 53). Discourse is one of the most frequently used ideas from Michel Foucault's work, and his definition differs from that of many linguists in that it is much wider in scope. Additionally, Foucauldian discourse is limited to language and words. Although Foucault described discourse in slightly different ways throughout his life and his work, the ideas of discourse used for the purposes of this research are drawn from *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), in which Foucault clarifies his notion(s) of discourse subsequent to his use of analysis of discourse in other publications; and from Foucault's essay entitled *The Order of Discourse* (1981), in which he discusses the formation and structures of discourse. In *The Archaeology of*

Knowledge, Foucault states that he has defined discourse "sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements" (Foucault, 1972, p. 80). By examining the different components of discourse according to Foucault, we see the complexities of this concept and the ways in which analyzing discourse can lead to a new understanding of social concepts, attitudes and beliefs.

First, the "general domain of all statements" refers to all utterances and statements made which may be grouped into one particular subject or theme, such as the discourse of special education, or the discourse of inclusion. Statements also reveal the rules of what knowledge is possible to acquire in a society or within a specific context. These rules may be detected through an analysis of the historical conditions under which they were created. The historical conditions, in turn, reveal the power relations at play that enabled the discourse to be formed in the manner in which it has manifested. A discourse, then, is a way of representing a concept through specific language that is used to discuss that concept, thereby creating meaning that is situated within rules of what can and cannot be known, within the historical context of the topic. Simply put, discourse is about "where meaning comes from" (Hall, 2001, p. 73). Herein lies the importance of the historical perspective for Foucault: meaning is derived from the statements that are made and that were formed by historical conditions and which reveal power relations at play. In this more general sense, discourse is therefore the way by which language produces knowledge. By "individualizable groups of statements," Foucault refers to statements that may be

grouped into one specific subject or theme, such as the discourse of special education or the discourse of inclusion.

Also included in discourse are "regulated practices that account for a number of statements" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). These are the unwritten rules and structures that enable particular statements and utterances to be made (Mills, 2003, p. 53). To use a simple example, there are no written rules for most human behaviours; however, in any given society most people think, speak and behave within a particular, and fairly constrained, framework. This framework constitutes a discourse. For Foucault, the interesting and informative parts of discourse are those rules and structures which allow for the production of certain discursive formations. These rules and structures also help to maintain and strengthen the dominant discourse, or other related discourses(s).

In its most comprehensive form, a discourse is a body of knowledge composed of several statements working in concert to form a "discursive formation." This group of statements bears similarities either in form or in function. Statements act as boundaries in that they can delimit what can and cannot be said within a discourse. When related statements are made within a discourse, this discursive formation makes it possible to construct the topic in a particular way. Discursive formations are often formed by institutions or other sites of power that affect individuals and the way they think (Mills, 2003, p. 64). These discursive formations constitute more specific discourses, such as the discourse of inclusion, that exist within a broader discourse, such as the discourse of education or the discourse of disability or the discourse of teaching.

Statements reveal the rules of what is possible to know. These rules may be detected through an analysis of the historical conditions under which they were created. The historical conditions, in turn, reveal the power relations at play that enabled the discourse to be formed in a particular manner. A discourse, then, is a way of representing a concept by providing a language that is used to discuss that concept, thereby creating meaning that is situated within the rules of what can and cannot be known, situated within the historical context of the topic.

Foucault also points to a relationship between statements and social practices. This is to say that a discourse can produce certain behaviours. Not only can discourse result in action, it is action; discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). A discursive pattern, then, can be distinguished because of the systematic ideas, opinions, concepts, ways of thinking and behaving which are formed within a particular context, and because of the effects of those ways of thinking and behaving. These patterns include a variety of elements, including discontinuity. Thus, we can assume that there is a discursive pattern of inclusive education because teachers, administrators, parents and students behave in a particular manner within their own specific context. In accordance with Foucault's theory, we can expect to see a certain number of discontinuous elements within this discourse of inclusion. Accordingly, a teacher may be influenced by the dominant discourse (or other discourses) with regard to how she/he thinks, speaks and acts in relation to the discourse on inclusion. Conversely, when a teacher acts in a manner that is not consistent with the other teachers in the school, for example, that teacher is actively undoing the discourse of that school. Because the norms that manage and

organize discourse include power, knowledge and truth, the teacher who displays behaviours opposite to those of others is challenging the accepted discourse within that context. The task of discourse analysis, then, is to discover the rules according to which this disunity of elements (including theory, practice and concepts) occurs in order to discern the meaning created by a given discourse.

According to Foucault, if we are to describe the relationships between discursive statements, we must not ignore discursive breaks that can be found within the discourse. To undertake discursive analysis, one must release any pre-existing assumptions of continuity of events or rationality in the discourse. When examining discourse, it is also important to examine "how it is that one particular statement appeared rather than another" (Foucault, 1974, p. 49). To Foucault, identifying the discourse is of lesser importance than identifying the events, social interactions and rules that shape the discourse within a particular culture, as it is through the examination of these events, interactions and rules that one gains the most insight. From this perspective, discourse may be seen as the ideas and practices which most influence our way of acting in a particular area of life as determined by their *disunity* rather than their unity.

Foucault's Archaeology and Genealogy

Included in discourse is not only what is said, but also what is not said. Foucault's discourse includes historical events or an archive of historical statements. An examination of histories and archives of a society, culture or field of study reveal, in a discontinuous manner, what cannot be said. By examining the historical context of a discourse, it becomes possible to explore and to seek out disjunctures in the history,

because this is where change occurs (Allan, 1996). Foucault calls this type of description of discursive formation *archaeology*. Archaeological analysis is "a historically-based study of what the discourses within the archive allow to be stated authoritatively" (Mills, 2003, p. 24). The archaeological description of discursive formation is more concerned with discovering the unwritten rules and structure of the discourse than an interpretation of its meaning. Here, the social processes that produce the meaning are emphasized, rather than causality for the revealed discourse. An archaeology, then, is a description of the historical conditions that allowed a particular discourse to emerge. Since discursive formations include disunities, performing an archaeological description of discourse has the potential to expand our understanding of a particular discourse (or discourses) by focusing on the diversity of events and texts, rather than looking merely for unified statements. It is therefore important to reveal the density and complexity of discursive practices, to go beyond the limitations of language and speech (Ball, 1990, p. 3). One of the main criticisms of Foucault's archaeology is that it did not include interpretation (Mills, 2003, p. 25), but in his later work, Foucault expanded on his methodology for analyzing discourse with the introduction of his concept of *genealogy*.

Whereas a Foucauldian archaeology is a description of historical events without searching for unities, genealogy may be thought of as a "history of the present." Foucault defined genealogy thus: "the union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today" (Foucault, 1980, p. 83). Like a genealogy that describes one's genetic roots, Foucault seeks to understand the historical roots of an

area of knowledge that is taken for granted. Genealogy differs from archaeology in that it involves more than a description of the historical conditions under which a discourse was able to form. Like archaeology, a genealogy still seeks to identify breaks or disunities in historical conditions. Additionally, in a genealogical analysis, Foucault is interested in examining power relationships revealed in discourses and looking for signs that those relationships are being challenged. For example, teachers who outwardly participate in the dominant discourse (inclusion) but act in a way that does not support that discourse are, in a subtle manner, challenging the system that generates and maintains the dominant discourse.

The central strategy which Foucault employs when using his methods of archaeology and genealogy is that of reversal (Allan, 1996). Reversal is Foucault's strategy to take a traditional interpretation of an historical or social event and examine it from an opposite perspective. This strategy involves examining ideas and discourses which are taken for granted in a society and looking at them from an opposite perspective. For example, in his analysis of mental illness in *Madness and Civilization* (1965), Foucault demonstrates that the concept of madness is not essential and unchanging, but rather it is a term or notion reinvented at different points in history according to the social and political norms and ideas of the society at the time. Using the technique of reversal, it might be possible to shed new light on the discourse on inclusion by reversing ideas that have been taken for granted within the field of education.

Foucault's Notion of Power

The challenging of power relationships relates to another main focus for Foucault: discourse as a societal process of understanding who is included in the discourse and who is excluded from it; i.e. who gets to participate and who does not. There are many processes that control and organize discourses (Foucault, 1971). For example, the power to form and direct discourse helps to create the meaning of the concepts within that discourse. The terminology used in a discourse is central to it; therefore, the power to define terms such as inclusion or what constitutes special education needs determines the direction and possible outcome of the discourse.

Although the concept of power is also central to Foucault's genealogy, it is important to note that he does not define it in the usual way of having the ability to force others to perform a task or as a repressive force exerted upon those with less power. Instead, people are the vehicles of power, rather than its point of application: "Power is employed and organized through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power." (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). Individuals therefore have the ability to resist power with each of their interactions. Additionally, people have power when they possess certain types of knowledge. This knowledge allows those who have it to exercise it through surveillance, regulation and discipline. In this respect, a special education director in a school division may hold more power in that school division than governmental forces because of the day-to-day ability to supervise and discipline the teacher. This is not to minimize the power held by government officials, however; their power may also be exercised through

their ability to distribute funds and evaluate the quality of services provided to the student with special education needs.

Surveillance and Panopticism

One of the more frequently used Foucauldian ideas is that of observation or surveillance. A metaphor typically used to represent Foucault's ideas on surveillance is that of the *Panopticon*. The Panopticon (see Figure 1), an idea created by Jeremy Bentham (Bentham, 1995), is the image of a prison watch tower system whereby prisoners can be easily watched at all times by a guard who is invisible to the prisoners. Although individual prisoners are not, in reality, being supervised at all times, they begin to alter their behaviour as a result of the possibility of being observed at any given moment by an observer who cannot be seen. This type of power requires little actual supervision, and results in the prisoners monitoring their own behaviours as a function of the structure of the environment.

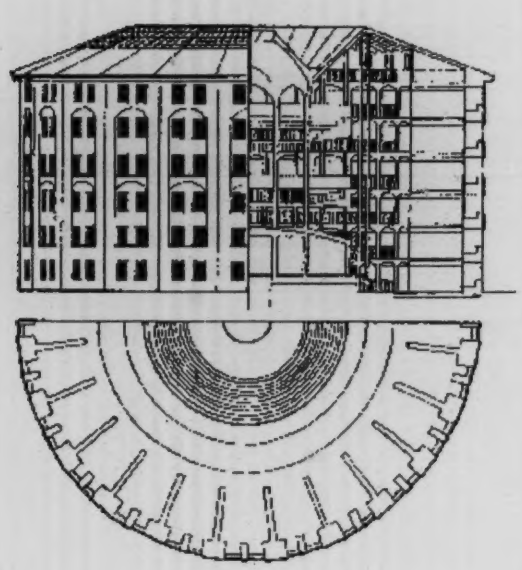
Foucault used the metaphor of the Panopticon to represent hierarchical structures that exist in institutions (Foucault, 1980, p.148). He argued that prisons, factories and schools are spatially arranged to allow for efficient surveillance through a mechanism he calls *disciplinary technologies*, or strategies for exerting discipline on an individual or subject. What occurs is that those being observed always act as though they are being observed. Thus this particular form of power relations has an impact on behaviours (Mills, 2003, p. 45).

The metaphor of the Panopticon has been used by many in the field of education to represent the powers of hierarchical observation that are exerted upon teachers and students in the educational system (see Allan, 1999; Jardine, 2005). For

example, the panoptic gaze is used on teachers through the use of provincial achievement testing whereby the teacher's performance is judged by her or his students' results. Students are supervised not only by teachers, but frequently also by other students in the class. In special education in particular, students are monitored to an even greater degree than other students through the use of specialists, Individualized Program Plans and the like. Thus, the Panopticon provides a potent image of the strong impact that observation may be seen to have a strong impact on the ways that teachers and students interact and behave in school.

Figure 1

1791 Blueprint of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon (Bentham, 1995)



Governmentality

Foucault's concept of *governmentality* expands upon his ideas of power. The idea of panopticism, as described above, is a method of governing people in institutions. Governmentality builds upon this metaphor more extensively, and involves "the analysis of who can govern and who is governed, but also the means by which the shaping of someone else's activities is achieved" (Foucault, 1991, as cited in Mills, 2003, p. 47). Foucault elaborates on the notion of power to include forms of social control in what he termed disciplinary institutions (including schools, hospitals and psychiatric institutions) as well as forms of knowledge held by individuals (Foucault, 2000). Power can by manifested by producing knowledge and specific discourses, which are then internalized by individuals and which can guide the behaviours of groups of people. This leads to more efficient forms of social control, as knowledge enables subjects to self-govern and to become part of a normalizing force (Foucault, 2000). A clear example of this type of governmentality has been the power held by special educators in schools, who hold knowledge that other teachers do not have such as the knowledge of characteristics and strategies associated with various disabilities. This system of power is challenged when more regular classroom teachers learn about special education needs, thereby decreasing the requirement for specialists who hold specialized knowledge and, therefore, power. However, this system of power is maintained by elevating knowledg of special education needs as though this knowledge were difficult to obtain.

Normalization, Otherness and the Subject

For Foucault, the idea of *normalization* is the constant comparison of people with others using a reliance on statistics and other means of identifying the "norm" (see Foucault, 1984, p. 21). This is a concept that is pervasive in education. Students with special education needs are the prime example of normalization within the school system, which uses batteries of tests for determining how a student is different from others. Skrtic (1995) notes that school failure is perceived to be an anomaly and is thereby objectified as a student disability which eliminates the opportunity for teachers to question the concept of school failure as a matter of practice (p. 69). Instead, students become "disabled" as a result of their school failure. This leads to another of Foucault's concepts, O*therness*, by which is meant that anyone who does not belong to the norm becomes an Other. This is certainly the case with students with special education needs in schools in Alberta and elsewhere. As a result of the dominant discourses that exist in (special) education, the concepts of normalization and Otherness are constantly reinforced in schools. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

For Foucault, normalization leads to individuals becoming *subjects*. The manner in which this is achieved is one of Foucault's main interests in studying power relationships. According to Foucault, an individual becomes a subject by being objectified by institutions as an object of production (e.g. teachers or students producing test results) and power (e.g. disciplinary technologies as discussed in the previous section on surveillance), situated within complex power relations (Foucault, 1982, p. 209). Further, Foucault explains that there are two meanings of the word

subject: "subject to someone else by control and dependence and tied to [one's] own identity by conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to" (Foucault, 1982, p. 212).

Subjugated Knowledges

For Foucault, there is a group of knowledges that are obscured by more dominant knowledges, but that can be revealed by critical genealogical analysis. These "subjugated knowledges" have been explicitly or implicitly disqualified as unimportant or insufficient. These are considered to be naïve knowledges, which are low on the hierarchy, and therefore dismissed. Foucault explained his notion of subjugated knowledges thus:

> When I say "subjugated knowledges" I mean two things. On the one hand, I am referring to historical contents that have been buried or masked in functional coherences or formal systemizations. [In other words, I am referring to] blocks of historical knowledges that were present in the functional and systematic ensembles, but which were masked, and the critique was able to reveal their existence by using, obviously enough, the tools of scholarship. Second, when I say "subjugated knowledges" I am also referring to a whole series of knowledges that have been disqualified as ... insufficiently elaborated knowledges: naïve knowleges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity.
>
> (Foucault, 2003, p. 7).

While it is natural for students' knowledge to be considered subjugated knowledges (Allan, 1999), it is also possible for teachers' knowledge to also be seen in this way.

The discourse of teachers as professionals is relatively recent (Labaree, 1992) and prior to the fairly recent professionalization of teaching, teachers had little or no status in society. This may be due to teaching being seen as a "domestic profession" and to the low status of the population served by teachers (i.e. children) (Weems, 2004). It has also been noted that teachers are noticeably absent in decision-making about policies that directly affect them (Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid & Shacklock, 2000, p.146)

Summary

Foucault's notions of discourse, archaeology and genealogy present a method for examining the history of inclusion in order to contextualize the past and current discourses and to analyse the systems of power which have formed teacher attitudes toward inclusion. In addition to discourse and discursive formations, one finds ideas of power, surveillance, normalization, Otherness, subjectification and subjugated knowledges in the Foucauldian "toolbox" that has guided the current research. These powerful analytical tools provide space for the emergence of a new perspective on a theory that has garnered much attention and which has been the object of much debate over the last twenty years.

Rationale for the Study

Inclusion has become the policy of choice amongst policy-makers and researchers throughout the world, but teachers' attitudes, and therefore *de facto* policies, have not followed written policy and research on this topic. Most prior research has been conducted using quantitative surveys using Likert-type scales (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002) with pre-specified categories and concepts used to

establish teacher attitude. Thus, the previous research on teacher attitudes of inclusion has assumed shared understandings of those categories or concepts, leaving little or no room for other interpretations (Lawson, Parker & Sikes, 2006). As noted by Skrtic (1995), the continued use of exclusively positivist methods to conduct research on inclusion aids in maintaining and upholding the status quo. The present study provides a new perspective on teacher attitudes by listening to the teachers' voices and by situating them within the framework of Foucauldian discourse. A Foucauldian analysis opens up a space for thinking differently about teacher attitudes about inclusion. The concept of inclusion is so entrenched as the dominant discourse that teachers may have been hesitant to disagree with the policy, even when their practices reflect a different attitude. To extend the current knowledge of teacher attitudes toward inclusion and their relationship with the implementation of this policy, a Foucauldian approach offers a promising new way of interpreting attitudes and actions within the inclusion discourse. This approach has the potential to help determine what are the conditions that allow teachers to feel they must conform to a discourse which is positive toward inclusion on the one hand, while subverting that discourse on the other.

Furthermore, this is an interdisciplinary study which combines elements of educational psychology and philosophy situated within an historical perspective. Although Foucauldian analyses have seen some popularity in the United Kingdom and Australia, this type work is only beginning to influence the educational field in Canada (see Allan, 1999, also Tremain, 2005 and Jardine, 2005).

The data in this study were analyzed in the manner of an interpretive inquiry; that is to say, a thematic analysis was performed. Thematic analysis, or interpretive

inquiry, has been characterized as a process used across methodologies and which may be used across a range of theoretical approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the purpose of this study, then, an interpretive inquiry was performed in order to analyze the data within the framework of Foucault's "Box of Tools".

Given the importance of teachers' attitudes in assuring the successful implementation of inclusion at the classroom level, establishing the factors that contribute to teachers' attitudes holds promise for increasing our awareness of the issues that teachers face with regard to inclusion, as well as bringing to light the systemic structures which endeavour to keep those attitudes intact.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this doctoral research is to analyze teachers' attitudes and actions with regard to their students with developmental disabilities, framed in an analysis of the discourse of inclusion in the Albertan context in order to bring a new and critical perspective to the existing research on teacher attitudes toward inclusion. Employing a Foucauldian theoretical and methodological framework provides a new perspective on the theme of teacher attitudes toward inclusion, and presents more holistic perspective on teachers' attitudes to, and strategies for, including students with special needs in their classrooms within the current educational and cultural context than has been presented in past studies. Through the use of Foucault's methodologies, research can document the way that a social form (specifically special education and inclusion) has arisen by examining the social form in a critical manner so as to expose the ways that power relationships work to form the discourse and to reinforce it.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this research:

1. What are the historical and current discourses about inclusive education?
2. How does teachers' discourse reflect their attitudes toward their students with cognitive disabilities?
3. How do teachers' attitudes reflect the dominant discourses of inclusion and/or their challenging of that dominant discourse?
4. How did the current and historical contexts of power surrounding inclusion help to form or maintain teachers' current discourse?
5. How does the discourse(s) of inclusion form teacher attitudes and help to keep them intact?

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Four main areas of work that support and inform the present study will be discussed in this review of the literature. First, definitions of terms and constructs used in the study will be presented. Then, an historical perspective on the important events in the evolution of the theory, policy and practice of inclusion will be presented. Thirdly, inclusion will be discussed within the current discursive context. Fourthly, research and literature pertaining to the discourse of teacher attitudes toward, and practice of inclusion will be examined, with a particular focus on including students with cognitive disabilities. Finally, relevant literature regarding the use of Foucauldian methods and theories in education, special education and inclusion will be presented.

Definitions and Constructs

The definitions and constructs described in this section have been selected for this study in order to clarify the language and discourses that inform it. Although some of these concepts are contested and understood in various ways, and all are socially constructed within limited discourses, the present study is grounded in the following terms:

Inclusion

For many years, the generally accepted definition of *inclusion* has been as an educational placement whereby students with special education needs are taught in the regular classroom. More recently, some authors have distanced themselves from the placement discourse (see Slee, 2006 and Allan, 2003 for discussions of the failure of inclusion as a placement policy to change teacher practice and improve social

inclusion) and inclusion as a concept has moved into a broader, more societal rights/participation discourse where placement is regarded to be less relevant than participation. According to the Index for Inclusion framework (Booth & Ainscow, 2002), *inclusion* is a much more complex and far-reaching concept.

Inclusion in education involves:

- Valuing all students and staff equally.
- Increasing the participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities of local schools.
- Restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools so that they respond to the diversity of students in the locality.
- Reducing barriers to learning and participation for all students, not only those with impairments or those who are categorised as "having special educational needs".
- Learning from attempts to overcome barriers to the access and participation of particular students to make changes for the benefit of students more widely.
- Viewing the difference between students as resources to support learning, rather than as problems to be overcome.
- Acknowledging the right of students to an education in their locality.
- Improving schools for staff as well as for students.
- Emphasising the role of schools in building community and developing values, as well as in increasing achievement.
- Fostering mutually sustaining relationships between schools and communities.
- Recognising that inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society.

This definition of inclusion has been chosen for the present study because it represents the emergent discourse of inclusion and because it includes attitudes and actions that may be required to create truly inclusive schools.

Regular Classroom

The term *regular classroom* is used here to denote a classroom in a standard, publicly funded school. The regular classroom includes diverse students with a variety of needs requiring an assortment of teaching methods and strategies such as lesson, timing and assessment modifications to best meet all of the students' diverse needs.

Segregated Classroom or Setting

A *segregated* classroom or setting denotes a classroom or school that is attended exclusively by students with special education needs. Some consider this type of classroom or school to be inclusive in that students are welcome, but this is not in keeping with the generally accepted definitions of inclusion/inclusive education.

Cognitive Disabilities

The term *cognitive disabilities* is often used interchangeably with intellectual or developmental disabilities. This and many other terms have been used to describe cognitive disabilities over the last 200 years, each representative of the discourse on difference and disability and the culture of the time. These have included *feeblemindedness, mental deficiency, mental disability, mental handicap,* and *mental subnormality* (Goodey, 2005; Mercer, 1992; Schroeder et al., 2002; Stainton, 2001; Trent, 1994; Wright & Digby, 1996 as cited in Schalock, Luckasson & Shogren 2007). In Alberta, the term most commonly used in the educational community is *cognitive disabilities*. According to Alberta Education's coding criteria 2006-2007, a

mild cognitive disability requires an IQ score between 50 and 75, plus or minus 5. To qualify for the code of moderate cognitive disability, a student must have an IQ score between 30 and 50. Additionally, both categories require an equivalent score on an Adaptive Behaviour Scale (Alberta Education, 2006). All of the students in the larger study from which this study's data were derived were "coded" with either a mild or moderate cognitive disability.

For the purposes of this study, the code given to the student by her or his school is not of great importance, given that all the students were diagnosed with a mild or moderate cognitive disability. Levels of abilities and delays vary from one student to another, and it can be fully expected that the students could be placed on a continuum based on their strengths and needs. Because the current study is an examination of teachers' discourse on including their students with cognitive disabilities, a general definition encompassing Alberta Education's coding criteria will be used. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, a *cognitive disability* is intellectual functioning that is significantly below average and that exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behaviour and that adversely affects educational performance.

Situating The Special Education/Inclusion Discourse: An Historical Overview

The philosophy of inclusion is a relatively new one in education, having been more widely adopted as part of public policy in the 1990s. Although some of today's classrooms contain students with a wide range of abilities, this was not always the case. History shows that the acceptance of educating students with special needs in a regular school and/or classroom, as well as the discourse on this topic, involved several important events and changing norms and discourses that occurred over a long

period of time. Examining the history of a topic is crucial to interpreting current and previous discourse in that area. Because Foucault's view of history is that it is a series of important events rather than a continuous evolution (Foucault, 1972, p. 131), the focus of this historical overview will be on events and cultural norms that took place or existed at specific times in history, thus helping to form the discourse on inclusion. Just as the history of any other concept would show disunity rather than unanimity in the field, inclusion is no different. It is also important to note that the dominant discourse does not represent all opinions on the topic, but does represent the voices of those holding enough power and knowledge to express their views in this area.

The focus of this historical overview will be on Alberta where possible, but since it is impossible to separate discourse in one region from that of another, a more general overview is sometimes necessary to point out major national or international events that have influenced the field of special education and inclusion in Alberta.

This historical overview provides a context for engaging with the accounts of teachers' attitudes that will follow in subsequent chapters. The overview presents, on the one hand, special education and inclusion as these concepts have been characterized in various publications on the subject, infused with a critical view and a description of some important "breaks" in the discourse.

Pre-19th Century

In medieval times, people with physical and mental disabilities were often used as fools and jesters and lived in castles where they were said to enjoy relative freedom (Pletsch, 1997). During this time, disability and poverty were "simply there, part of the general human lot of misery (Foucault, 1967 as quoted in Armstrong, 2003). Then, in

the days of the Christian Reformation in Europe, leaders of the movement such as Calvin and Luther deemed those with disabilities to be "filled with Satan" (Pletsch, 1997). The 17th century marks the start of the Age of Reason which led to the period that Michel Foucault refers to as the period of "the Great Confinement" (Foucault, 1965). During this time, there was a great surge in the creation of what Foucault called houses of confinement throughout Europe. Many of these institutions housed all those deemed to be "mad" (Foucault, 1965), likely including many people whom we would now identify as having cognitive disabilities.

19th Century

The practice of confining those with disabilities would last through to the early and mid-19th century in Europe and in Canada, during which some children with special education needs were institutionalized and often poorly treated (Andrews & Lupart, 2000). Many others children with cognitive, physical or behavioural differences "spent most of their time in places other than school" (Osgood, 2008, p. 13). During the same era, a medical model of special education became the norm, in that children were diagnosed by a medical professional (Andrews & Lupart, 2000); and records show that medical professionals used sometimes dubious research to label people with disabilities (Gould, 1996; Pletsch, 1997). Labels such as (ranked from most to least severe) "idiot," "imbecile" and "feeble-minded" were prescribed by the British Mental Deficiency Act, and this terminology was often used in Canada, along with the American term of "defectives" (Gould, 1996; Pletsch, 1997). These distinctions may be seen as being at the root of today's systems of classification and labelling students with special education needs and as also underlying the notion that

disabilities can be "treated" (Armstrong, 2003, p. 10). During this era, children with disabilities were kept away from the rest of society in institutions that ranged from orphanages to schools for the blind and deaf (Hutchinson, 2002), in the name of meeting their best interests, or of "managing the problem" of persons with disabilities (Armstrong, 2003, p. 2). In Foucauldian terms, these institutions were effective systems of surveillance and control of persons with disabilities. Starting in Europe and moving to North America, the trend of educating students in institutions eventually began to spread (Andrews & Lupart, 2000; Foucault, 1965; Pletsch, 1997), and some children with disabilities were able to benefit from some degree of education. However, some have said that these institutions served as much to relieve the parents and the community of their frustrations with the individual with special education needs as they did to educate those individuals (Osgood, 2008, p.26). Therefore, the development of institutions should not be seen merely as humanitarian reforms, but as a result of both humanism and eugenics at work in an attempt to manage the problem of difference at hand. Furthermore, the education of students with disabilities was the start of exclusion as part of the regular social order (Armstrong, 2003, p. 13), which continues today.

Early 20th Century

Some have characterized the first half of the twentieth century as the start of the era of segregated education for students with special needs (Andrews & Lupart, 2000). While this may have been true for some students such as those who were deaf or blind (Osgood, 2008, p. 36), rural schools were poorly equipped to identify special education needs, so students either attended regular schools where teachers made what

may be thought of today as accommodations for these students or children did not attend school at all and many with cognitive, physical or behavioural differences "spent most of their time in places other than school" (Osgood, 2008, p. 13). In many areas, as ideas of eugenics gained increasing acceptance in society, it was believed that institutional care would be more cost efficient and would protect society (Osgood, 2008, p. 34). As social and economic developments became increasingly complex, a greater number of people were no longer considered "useful" as a result of a diminished need for unskilled labour as mechanization of industry took place (Armstrong, 2003, pp. 14-16). This brought rise to special education, "a means of legitimating a labour crisis by dealing with the 'useless'" (Tomlinson, 1988).

Paralleling the emergence of what Foucault might consider "scientificity", or a reliance on and belief of the primacy of science, in the early twentieth century the IQ test came into being as a result of the French government commissioning Alfred Binet to find a method of identifying students in a classroom requiring some form of special education (Gould, 1996). In April 1905, it was announced that Alfred Binet and Théodore Simon had developed an objective measure capable of diagnosing different degrees of mental retardation (Wolf, 1973). Soon after this announcement, the *Binet-Simon Intelligence Test* was published in *L'Année Psychologique* (Binet & Simon, 1905). New versions were released in 1908 and 1911 as a result of extensive research testing involving "normal" and mentally retarded subjects (Becker, 2003). However, Binet cautioned against using the IQ score as a permanent label, rather than as a method of identifying those students who required extra assistance in the classroom. Binet feared that teachers would use his test as a way of removing troubling students

from the classroom (Binet & Simon, 1905) or that a label may influence a teacher's attitude and that the teacher would be influenced by knowing of this label (Gould, 1996). We know with certainty that Binet recommended his intelligence test be used only for offering extra help to those students who needed it, but contrary to these cautions, his tests were ultimately (and often are to this day) used as a uni-dimensional measure of intelligence and as a tool used specifically for labelling and excluding students. However, one recommendation made by Binet that was followed was the creation of special classes for students with disabilities, including special methods of education in smaller classes (Gould, 1996). Less than two decades after this recommendation was made, special classes were emerging in Canada.

With the arrival of publicly funded education and mandatory school attendance in many provinces, some special classes for students with cognitive disabilities were provided in residential schools by the 1920s (Hutchinson, 2002). However, attitudes toward persons with disabilities remained negative and exclusionary as North American societies believed that disabilities should be eradicated through identification and treatment (Osgood, 2008, p. 18).

Building upon the discourse of exclusion during the same era, the eugenics movement was growing, and across North America it became common practice to sterilize people deemed to be "feeble-minded," "mentally deficient" (Radford, 1994), or "morons" (Cairney, 1996). It was believed that preventing such people from reproducing would "free mankind [sic] from crime, disease and addictions" (Cairney, 1996), thus preserving social order. In 1927, the government of Alberta at the time (the United Farmers of Alberta), passed the Sexual Sterilization Act. This Act

remained as legislation in Alberta until it was repealed in 1972. Throughout the duration of this statute, and due to the decision-making power of the Alberta Eugenics Board, over 2800 people were forcibly sterilized in Alberta (Grekul, Krahn & Odynak, 2004). Thus, the strength of the eugenics movement demonstrates that attitudes toward people with disabilities remained exclusionary. As argued by Armstrong (2003), this movement may be seen as a way of managing or controlling those with disabilities and that this discourse of power still colours today's discourse of inclusion.

In what may be seen as a discursive break, during the Second World War persons with disabilities who could not participate in the war were able to work. This phenomenon was seen throughout Europe and North America (Armstrong, 2002), but ended at the end of the war. This extends the discourse of usefulness of persons with disabilities in that suddenly, once the war was over, they were no longer needed. It is ironic that those with disabilities who were employed during the war were no longer "able" to work once they were no longer needed. But, despite widely continued exclusionary practices, the contributions made by persons with disabilities during the war made them more visible in western societies, thus contributing to what some consider as the beginning of subtly shifting attitudes (Armstrong, 2002).

1950s and 60s

The 1950s and 60s saw the formation of advocacy groups such as the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded and the Canadian Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (Andrews & Lupart, 2000; Hutchinson, 2002). According to Winzer (1993), Canada saw an increase in the number of special education schools and classes due to increased public concern for those with mental disabilities and an

increasingly optimistic view of their potential. Parent groups and professional associations lobbied governments of the time to educate students with disabilities in special classes and in 1950 there were approximately 250 students enrolled in special education classes in Alberta (Church, 1980). In 1956, provincial funding became available for private schools for what were deemed trainable mentally retarded children. By 1965, the number of students in special education programs had grown to over 2000, with more than 1,500 of these in Opportunity classes (a term still commonly used today) for students deemed to be "educably mentally handicapped" (Conn-Blowers & Mcleod, 1989). However, the aims of these classes were oftentimes seen to be more therapeutic in nature than based on providing the best education possible for students with disabilities. At the same time, the shift in terms from *trainable mentally handicapped* to *educable* demonstrates that attitudes about educating those with cognitive disabilities had also shifted to some extent in favour of providing students with education that was more respectful of their particular needs.

Although some have not agreed with the idea that humanitarianism played a large role in the increasing number of students with disabilities being educated, many have argued that this was indeed the case (Armstrong, 2002). However, this development may also be seen as a move toward making children with disabilities less visible in society by placing them in separate schools or classes (Armstrong, 2002), and as a vehicle "providing explanations for social and economic inequalities which legitimise that inequality" (Finch, 1984, as quoted in Armstrong, 2003, p. 19).

As students were being placed in special education classes, the education system had to find ways to identify the students that would be sent to those classes and

the type of class they would be placed in. Thus, this era marked the beginning of categorization of students with special needs. For example, Church (1980) shows that there were three types of special classes in Alberta in 1950 and that this number gradually increased to nine in 1965. Andrews and Lupart (2000) link this trend of categorization to the still commonly used "Five-box approach" of referral, testing, labelling, placement and programming. The use of this approach places only minimal focus on the individual needs of the student and how to best meet those needs, but it has nonetheless been entrenched in the educational system since the 1960s.

In 1968, Lloyd Dunn published an article that is still part of the inclusion discourse today. In his article, Dunn challenged the use of the special day class (SDC) model for children labelled educably mentally retarded (EMR). He theorized that EMR students would succeed at least as well in regular classrooms. Dunn called for the creation of integrated service delivery models for students with disabilities, and he envisioned pull-out, remedial resource rooms staffed by special education teachers, as the way to provide "a better education" for children with learning problems (p. 5). Dunn's article continues to be discussed today as being a starting point that would lead to the evolving discourse on inclusion (for a discussion of the impact of Dunn's article 25 years after its publication see Semmel & Gerber, 1994).

1970s

As the number of special education classes grew to over 400 in Alberta, the 1970s marks the beginning of integration of students with special needs into regular schools. By this time, school boards had taken over the responsibility of educating students with disabilities in Alberta (Conn-Blowers & Mcleod, 1989). Meanwhile,

some researchers were beginning to call into question the efficacy of special education. In 1970, the CELDIC (Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children) Report, *One Million Children*, was published in Canada (Roberts & Lazure, 1970). An event which may be seen as a discursive break, this report, the result of an extensive pan-Canadian study led by psychiatrists Roberts and Lazure, advocated the integration of students with special needs in the regular classroom and did so in a forceful manner:

> ... teachers (and others) were made to feel that only specialists could help the handicapped child. In this process, the front line person is made to feel inadequate, and the child is segregated as being different, because of the special treatment provided.
>
> The variations on this theme are legion; but we believe that principles are clear. The child suffers when his difficulty is reinforced and magnified through his separation on the basis of his handicap into a special and isolated group...
>
> The conclusions which we draw are obvious. Specialists must spend more time and effort in supporting and strengthening the persons who are responsible for the day to day care of children, and especially the children with emotional and learning disorders. (p. 6)
>
> In brief what we recommend is that the help required by a child with an emotional or learning disorder be provided as a right and be provided in such a way that it enhances the child's self-esteem, both in his own eyes and in the eyes of others. This help should be provided to the child in his home

> community through the normal life experiences of children. This places an emphasis on families and upon the regular school classroom.
>
> We recommend many ways of supporting families; day care, homemaker services, counselling; and we recommend that the classroom teacher have consultative and specialist help readily available both in the school and from the community to increase his skill and strengthen his role in working with a child with emotional and learning disorders.
>
> In keeping with this, we recommend many changes in the school system generally and a reorganization of special education so that it functions primarily within the regular classroom rather than in separate segregated classes and schools. (p.10)

Although many of the recommendations made in the CELDIC report have yet to be fully implemented nearly 40 years later, this report remains as a critical event in the formation of discourse about including students with special needs in the regular classroom in Canada. Even though this report called for inclusive practices, the recommendations made were fully entrenched in the discourse of identification and diagnosis, thereby emphasizing deficits, that was dominant at the time, and which is still very much prevalent today. Given that the two main authors were psychiatrists, it is not surprising that they advocated for an inclusive system entrenched in a system of identification of deficits. Based on the medical and psychological discourses, these ideas remain prevalent today.

Other important work in the formation of the inclusion discourse was Wolfensberger's introduction of his concept of normalization to the field of education.

In his 1972 book, Wolfensberger proposed the following definition of the concept: "Utilization of means which are as culturally normative as possible in order to establish and / or maintain personal behaviours and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible" (p. 29). Wolfensberger cautioned that normalization would not be identical from one culture or set of circumstances to another, but rather that those people considered to be deviants should be treated in a manner, and taught to act, as normal or as conventional as possible.

Wolfensburger's normalization is at once a process and a goal. In defining normalization, he notes that there is a disjuncture between the theory and practice of normalization; some people, although in agreement with the principle of normalization, engage in practices that are the opposite of the principle that the person endorsed (p. 30). Interestingly, the field of inclusion faces much the same situation today. Wolfensberger's recommendations for the de-institutionalization of people with disabilities into normalized environments proved important in forming more positive opinions about children with disabilities and their potential, and for opening the door to gradual acceptance of the concept of integration (Andrews & Lupart, 2000; Winzer, 1993).

It is important to note here that Wolfensberger's concept of normalization differs significantly from Foucault's concept of the same name. We are reminded that Foucault's concept of normalization is seen as a way to exclude people who are outside of the norm, whereas Wolfensberger's term refers to an attempt to create "normal" behaviours and environments so that individuals who are considered to be outside of the norm may feel more included. Where the term normalization is used in

the remainder of this thesis, unless noted, it is used from the Foucauldian perspective in keeping with the theoretical framework for this study.

In response to reports and research mentioned above, in 1971 the *Standards for Education of Exceptional Children in Canada* were published. These Standards put forth the recommendation that teacher education programs offered at universities include courses on students with special education needs. Within a few years, courses in special education were taught in several provinces, including Alberta (Hutchinson, 2002).

Around the same time, the United States passed Public Law 94-142, also called the Education of all Handicapped Children Act (EHA), which established the rights of people with disabilities to a free and appropriate education. Although this event took place in the United States, it had a profound effect on the discourse not only in the U.S. but also in Canada. One important effect of PL 94-142 was that it opened the door for litigation by parents of students with special needs to contest placement or services being offered to their child. This would also have a noticeable effect in Canada.

In 1978, a landmark court decision was made in the Alberta Supreme Court, obligating the community school she attended to provide Shelley Carrière, a student with cerebral palsy, an *appropriate* education in her rural community of Lamont County, rather than sending her to a specialized school in Edmonton (Andrews & Lupart, 2000; Hutchinson, 2002). This decision set an important precedent for future cases involving the rights of students with special education needs in Alberta and beyond. The meaning of the term "appropriate" as used in the decision was

subsequently questioned. This term is currently used in the Standards for Special Education and the meaning is still often questioned in the current Albertan context.

1980s

The 1980s were marked by two major events that influence the discourse on special education and inclusion to this day. In 1980, a publication entitled *Special Education Across Canada: Issues for the 80s* (Csapo & Goguen, 1980) was a significant contributor to the discourse at the time; and, in 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was adopted, which was also a very important part of the discourse then, and remains thus today. Specifically, the chapter in *Special Education Across Canada* dealing with the state of special education in Alberta raises some questions that are still part of the discourse today. This chapter discusses the main issues in Special Education in Alberta at the time: philosophy, funding/ labelling, legal responsibilities, what constitutes a suitable program for a student with a disability and whether all children are educable. The first issue mentioned is the lack of "hard evidence" that integration and (Wolfensberger's) normalization are anything more than philosophical orientations or that they provide, in practice, any benefits to the student with special needs. Second, the authors point out that there are two main obstacles to accomplishing integration in the school system: an outdated funding model that was created in a time of segregation, and the issue of labelling without indicating the type of programming required by the student. The third major issue pertains to legislation and whether or not school boards' responsibilities to educate students with special needs should be specifically stated in provincial laws. The fourth issue deals with what constitutes a suitable program for a student with a disability.

Since even experts disagree on the nature of the disability, then who would determine the best programming for this child? Lastly, the authors raise the question of whether all students are educable and whether or not schools should be expected to accept all students regardless of disability and regardless of their needs and the school's ability to meet those needs. All of these questions still colour the current discourse on inclusion in one form or another.

Another key event that occurred in the 1980s was the adoption of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as part of the *Constitution Act* passed in 1982, and which took effect in 1985. Section 15 of the Charter guarantees equality of rights and freedom from discrimination to minorities, including people with disabilities. The guarantees made by the Charter drew the public's attention to their rights and their ability to litigate if their rights were not being respected. In turn, the Charter opened up the possibility for people with disabilities and/or their parents to dispute a school board's decision with regards to placement and treatment of students with disabilities (Hutchinson, 2002).

Generally speaking, the 1980s saw relatively few major events in special education, but the period has been characterized by some as a time of greater acceptance of mainstreaming (Andrews & Lupart, 2000). In Alberta, the funding model for special education was reviewed and revised during that decade. In 1984, block funding was introduced as part of the Management Finance Plan (Conn-Blowers & Mcleod, 1989), making special education in the province non-categorical and providing school jurisdictions in the province the ability to determine the needs of their students and use the funding in a manner most appropriate to meeting those

needs. This block funding model replaced a complex system of grants which required school jurisdictions to spend a great deal of time fulfilling the administrative requirements. The previously established Program Unit Grant (PUG) designated for special needs in early childhood remained unchanged, as the Department of Education had deemed it to be effective (Conn-Blowers & Mcleod, 1989).

In 1988, Alberta introduced its School Act, which included sections specific to supporting students with special education needs. This legislation established the legal requirement of school boards to serve students with disabilities within a special education program. Although many saw this as a positive move for students with special education needs, teachers were increasingly concerned with the mounting duties and responsibilities that came with the process of mainstreaming students with special education needs (Lupart, 1998). Of course, this is a concern amongst teachers that continues to exist today.

1990s

The 1990s mark the beginning of the development of the current discourse on inclusion. This is evidenced by the increasing number of studies and articles on the topic (Andrews & Lupart, 2000). Researchers began calling for a restructuring of education in order for inclusion to be possible and to be effective (see Stainback, Stainback & Bunch, 1989b; Lupart, 1998). The discourse on inclusion became a discursive formation on the ethics or morality of including students with special needs in the regular classroom (Bricker, 1995; Ferguson, 1995; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994; Stainback & Stainback, 1990; 1991). In fact, some argued that "... no amount of scientific research can be conducted that will in the final analysis justify segregation"

(Stainback & Stainback, 1991, p. 236). Inclusion became a human rights issue and, for many, a moral imperative (Bricker, 1995; Karagiannis, Stainback, & Stainback, 1996; Kauffman, 1995). This marks a significant event in the development of the discourse of inclusion, which began as discourses of medicine and psychology.

The term Regular Education Initiative (REI), an argument in favour of including all children in the regular educational system regardless of their special needs, became a common part of the discourse during this time (see Wang, Reynolds & Walberg, 1986 and Stainback & Stainback, 1992). The REI was based on the following assumptions: that students are more alike than different, therefore special instruction is not required; good teachers can teach all their students; quality education is possible for all students without special education categories; and educating students in separate spaces was inequitable and discriminatory (Kavale & Forness, 2000). According to Lipsky & Gartner (1987) and Stainback & Stainback (1988), only total integration of general and special education can work to the ultimate benefit of children. Some authors calling for implementation of the REI suggested that the continuum of special education services had "outlived its usefulness and should be eliminated" (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995b).

In order to put the REI into practice, researchers began to call for the merger of regular and special education by changing instruction and improving services in order to equip teachers and schools to meet the needs of all students in the classroom (Andrews & Lupart, 2000; Lupart, 1998). However, because schools were entrenched in a system of separation between regular and special education, this would not be an easy shift (Ysseldyke, Algozzine & Thurlow, 1992).

Increasingly throughout the 1990s, research began to emerge for and against full inclusion. Kavale and Forness (2000) called the divergence in views a "conflict of visions" and an "ideological divide" that still exists today. Full inclusionists accused so-called segregationists of being intellectually and morally bankrupt; inclusionists were called upon to provide empirical data to support their claim that inclusion was the only way to properly educate students with special needs. However, it should be noted that in accordance with the Charter, perhaps the onus of proof should have been placed on the segregationists to show that segregation was preferable to inclusion. During the development of this discourse, researchers became advocates of sorts, which resulted in polarized opinions for and against inclusion.

Despite the divergent opinions, throughout North America inclusion began to take shape in practice as governments reviewed and revised their policies on special education. Canada signed on to the United Nation's *Convention of the Rights of the Child* in September of 1990, which states that "…the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity…". With specific reference to children with disabilities, Article 23 of the *Convention* declares the following:

> 1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.
> 2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which

application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child.

3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development.

4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international co-operation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Meanwhile, in Alberta the minister of Education Jim Dinning ruled in favour of the inclusion of Margaret Eggert in Strathcona County. This ruling was important in establishing the policy of inclusion as the first placement option which remains in the

policy today. Then, a discussion paper entitled *Placement of Exceptional Students: A Consultation Paper* was released in 1992. It suggested that the best placement decisions were made on the basis of best serving the needs of the child. Soon after this paper came a policy on integration which was released in September of 1993, indicating that the first placement option for students with special needs to be considered by school boards was in regular classrooms in neighbourhood schools. The policy stressed that school boards must make placement decisions based on the needs of the student with special needs as well as those of other students in class, and the decision must be made in collaboration with parents, teachers and administrators.

Voices in opposition to inclusion were few as the discourse and the literature began to frown upon disagreement with the philosophy. However, some were not deterred. The loudest of these voices was perhaps those of Herrnstein and Murray in their book, The Bell Curve (1994). This book served as an attempt to return to an era of so-called social Darwinism by making the argument that those that occupy the lower class are genetically inferior; and furthermore, that this inferiority may be measured through the use of the IQ test. Although Herrnstein and Murray presented a theory that may be considered unacceptable within current societal norms and within the discourse of psychological testing, one of their basic tenets remains part of the discourse today: namely, that IQ tests can and should be used as a measure of one's innate abilities in order to be included in or excluded from the "norm".

Meanwhile, with most jurisdictions in North America having adopted integration or inclusion policies, the discourse reflected many discussions on how to implement these policies. In 1997, the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA)

released a report entitled *In the Balance: Meeting special needs within public education – Task force findings and recommendations*. The main purposes of the task force were to gauge public opinion about special education programs and their impacts on public education in Alberta; to identify and showcase exemplary special education programs in the province; and to determine how much jurisdictions were spending on special education (ASBA, 1997). The task force considered presentations, written submissions and questionnaires to determine the 15 key findings. These findings included agreement with inclusion of students with special needs in their neighbourhood public school with necessary supports and coordinated services. The task force also recommended a review of special education funding in Alberta, and called for a review of the practice of assessing for the purpose of coding and labelling students rather than assessing them for programming and determining their specific needs. Furthermore, the task force found that parents, school boards and teachers alike were frustrated with the existing system of special education in the province (ASBA, 1997). To schools and school boards, the task force made the recommendations that inclusion be embraced and that teachers and school boards be prepared to meet the needs of all students. Many of these frustrations still exist amongst the same groups today, as many of the changes recommended by the task force were not implemented by the provincial government. "Given what we heard during our tour of five communities and in our meetings with hundreds of Albertans, we believe we have a long, long way to go before we can say that our public-education [sic] system is meeting the needs of students with special needs," writes task-force chair John

Paterson, associate dean of education at the University of Alberta. Paterson's (1997) prediction appears to have been true.

The Current Discursive Context

While inclusion is now a widely used and increasingly accepted and known term, Graham and Slee (2008) caution that it is composed of many competing discourses that include differing meanings and understandings. These authors remind us that "originally, inclusive education was offered as a protest, a call for radical change to the fabric of schooling". However, Graham and Slee argue that the term inclusion is increasingly being used as a way of "explaining and protecting the status quo". This is to say that although the discourse refers to inclusion, the meaning of the discourse remains firmly planted in the old notions of special education and integration, whereby students who are considered to be "Others" are only reluctantly included (physically) in the regular classroom where they may receive a number of special education services. Although inclusion is part of the educational vernacular, Graham and Slee point out that "[w]e are *still* citing inclusion as our goal; we are *still* waiting to include, yet *speaking* as if we are already inclusive" (Slee & Allan, 2001, p.181, as cited in Graham & Slee, 2008). Therefore, although the discourse of inclusion appears to have moved forward, an interrogation of the discursive formations within and around the inclusion discourse may reveal otherwise.

Despite being part of the "uninterrogated normative assumptions that shape and drive policy" (Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2000), other discourses have continued to form within the inclusion field, based on the assumption that inclusion is a *fait accompli* in schools. One of the current discourses appears to be a shift toward the best

ways by which to practice inclusion and a move toward implementing successful inclusive programs by focusing on educating *all* students in the regular classroom. This emerging discourse may appear to illustrate a shift toward acceptance of diversity in the classroom and away from a reliance on diagnosis and categories in favour of meeting the needs of all students in a classroom through the use of varied instructional methods. Although this shift is not yet widely accepted, movements have been made in various jurisdictions to identify barriers that prevent some students from participating, accessing the information they need to learn and be successful (Slee, 2006). While these ideas are not necessarily new to the field, their increasing acceptance is evidenced by the growth in the popularity of the concepts of differentiated instruction (e.g. Tomlinson, 2004, 2005), Universal Design for Learning (see Hitchcock, Meyer, Rose, & Jackson, 2002 and Rose, 2001) and Assistive Technology for Learning (Edyburn, 2006, 2003). Researchers and educators alike are looking for ways of better serving the needs of all students in the regular classroom regardless of disability or label. Advocates for these movements suggest that technology is an effective means of narrowing the achievement gap between students who learn easily and those who struggle (see Edyburn, 2006).

Adding to the discourse on meeting all needs, research has emerged that interrogates the means of identifying and implementing quality inclusive education programs (Timmons, 2006; Buysse, Skinner & Grant, 2001). There have also been calls for doing away with special education as a part of inclusive education, because it is thought that it only serves to maintain the status quo (Nes & Stromstad, 2006; Slee, 2006; Thomas & Loxley, 2001).

Despite these movements toward educating all students in the regular classroom, there still remains considerable resistance from classroom teachers who feel that they are lacking in training and support for implementing effective teaching, as well as a lack of organizational methods to support inclusion (Timmons, 2006). It would appear from the research that teachers have not been part of the same discourse of inclusion and have instead remained focused on sustaining the notions of difference (Graham & Slee, 2008). Herein lies the disconnection between the academic and political discourses of inclusion on the one hand and that of the teachers charged with implementing the policies on the other. This disconnection has often been attributed to teacher attitudes, a topic which has been the focus of numerous research studies over the last two or more decades. Given that teacher attitudes are a key element in an investigation of teachers' current discourse(s), it is important to examine the body of research relating to teacher attitudes about inclusion.

Teacher Attitudes And Beliefs About Inclusion

Teachers' discourse on inclusion is relayed through their stated beliefs about and/or attitudes toward the subject. Therefore, one effective way to aid in the interrogation of teachers' discourse is through the examination of reports of teacher attitudes and beliefs with regard to inclusion. For over two decades, educational researchers have been investigating teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, having recognized that these attitudes are a major factor in the success or failure of the inclusion project (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Chow & Winzer, 1992; Farrell, 2004; Hannah & Pliner, 1983; Horne, 1985; Martinez, 2004; Sarason, 1982). Some studies have examined attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of regular classroom teachers

teaching classes that included students with special education needs (Cook, Tankersley, Cook & Landrum, 2000; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Other studies have focused on the practices used in implementing inclusive educational programs (Fox & Ysseldyke, 1997; Janney & Snell, 1997), particularly in those schools where inclusive programs were considered successful (York-Barr, Schultz, Doyle, Kronberg & Crossett, 1996).

Research from the 1970s to the early 1990s indicated that teachers were generally not in favour of including students with disabilities in their classrooms (Bacon & Schultz, 1991; Larrivee & Cook, 1979). Overall findings of more recent research investigating teachers' attitudes toward inclusion indicate that teachers are for the most part positive about inclusion as a concept but are negative about inclusion in practice (see Avrimidis & Norwich, 2002). A meta-analysis of research investigating teachers' attitudes toward inclusion was conducted by Scruggs and Mastropieri in 1996. The authors included in their analysis 28 studies published between 1958 and 1995 which surveyed a combined total of 10,560 teachers. They examined the surveys used in these studies and identified common areas and items related to teachers' attitudes toward mainstreaming/inclusion (using the two terms interchangeably). One of the questions addressed by Scruggs and Mastropieri was, "Do teachers support mainstreaming/inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classes?" Results of the study showed that approximately two-thirds of the teachers reported positive attitudes. However, the majority of teachers did not feel that they had adequate time, training or resources (material and personnel) to successfully implement inclusion in their classrooms. Attitudes also varied in strength depending

upon the students' disability. Teachers were far less favourable (22-38%) toward including students with cognitive disabilities, as well as other disabilities considered to be disruptive to the class such as behavioural/emotional issues. Additionally, few teachers thought that inclusion was the "best" academic or social environment for students with disabilities, with only about one-third of teachers agreeing with this postulate. Overall, Scruggs and Mastropieri found no relationship between agreement with inclusion and date of publication, indicating that attitudes remained relatively stable across a span of over thirty years.

Most teachers in this review agreed that "significant changes" would have to occur before they could successfully accommodate mainstreaming and many were not willing to make these changes. For example, one of the most supported changes was reduced class size as well as limiting the number of students with disabilities in one class. Thus, this research demonstrates that although the teachers' attitudes toward inclusion are generally positive, areas related to the practice of inclusion are generally negative. This conclusion is well supported by a more recent Australian qualitative study by Anderson, Klassen & Georgiou (2007). In this study, the authors found that many of the teachers interviewed noted that "the practice is a lot different than the theory". Teachers in the study also indicated concern with their lack of support and ability to work with students with disabilities. Based on these findings and many other similar findings, authors such as Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) and McNally, Cole and Waugh (2001) have indicated the importance of listening to teachers' voices with regard to inclusion before making policy changes in this direction, a suggestion which

has also been made by Stainback & Stainback (1992) as well as York, Doyle & Kronberg (1992).

A number of Canadian studies have also investigated teachers' attitudes toward mainstreaming/inclusion (Bunch et al., 1997; Edmunds, 2003; Edmunds, 1998; Hanrahan & Rapagna, 1987; King & Edmunds, 2001; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998; Valeo & Bunch, 1998). Findings have been mixed, varying by geographic area and depending upon the type of attitude measure. The largest of these to date, a national study by Bunch et al. (1997), reported that teachers were generally positive toward inclusion but had major concerns about the sufficiency of their training for inclusion and its effect on their workload. When asked specifically about elements of inclusion such as its effects on the regular classroom teacher, the appropriateness of teacher workload, teacher self-confidence in implementing inclusion and the adequacy of teacher preparedness, Edmunds and colleagues (1998, 2000, 2003) reported generally negative responses from teachers. These findings also support those of Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) as well as a number of other researchers (Edmunds, 2003; Cook, Tankersley, Cook, & Landrum, 2000; Edmunds, 1999; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998; Vaughn, Schumm, Jadllad, Slusher, & Saumell, 1996). Thus, through these numerous studies, teachers reported favourable attitudes toward inclusion, but less positive acceptance in practice. One recent Canadian study (Dyson & Zhang, 2004) which compared Canadian and Chinese teachers' attitudes toward inclusion found that in comparison with previous studies, Canadian teachers demonstrated more negative attitudes toward inclusion. In this study, several of the Canadian teachers had reservations about the value of inclusion as a concept and questioned the ability of

inclusive education to provide students with the necessary skills to be successful later in life. The authors compared the qualitative data from the Canadian teachers to that of Chinese teachers and found that the Chinese teachers were nearly in consensus with regards to inclusion being the most appropriate choice for students with special education needs. Similarly to other studies mentioned above, Canadian teachers demonstrated less positive attitudes about inclusion in practice in Dyson & Zhang's (2004) study.

Some researchers have pointed out that there is necessarily a relationship between these attitudes and the behaviours that teachers exhibit in the classroom; and furthermore, that these behaviours have a significant impact on the effectiveness of inclusion (Hastings & Oakford, 2003; Van Reusen, Shoho & Barker, 2000).

Relationship Between Attitudes and Behaviours

This relationship has been noted by Stanovich and Jordan (1998), who found that teachers' responses on a questionnaire used to assess attitudes toward inclusion were not significantly correlated with their Pathognomic-Interventionist (P-I) Interview, which is used to assess attitudes as reflected in their observable classroom behaviours. In this study, Stanovich and Jordan found that teachers' behaviours were better predicted by constructs other than mere attitudes. Building on Ajzen's theory of planned behaviours, these authors conceptualized three constructs as determining behaviour that leads to effective inclusion: teachers' beliefs about students with special needs and their inclusion in general education classrooms; principals' beliefs about inclusive practices in their school; and thirdly, teachers' sense of efficacy in their own teaching. The researchers operationalized each of the predictors into a range

of behaviours on a continuum that could be characterized as "pathognomonic," which is a norm-referenced or medical model of looking for pathological characteristics within the student (i.e. problems are genetic or inherent to the student) or "interventionist," (a belief that the student's problems result from environmental and instructional factors that can be modified to assist the student). The P-I constructs were examined in more detail in the research, because they are thought to be representative of the critical teaching behaviours. The operationalized constructs were incorporated into Stanovich and Jordan's (1998) P-I interviews and were found to be valuable in predicting effective outcomes by means of discovering teachers' attitudes.

The Stanovich and Jordan model is important to the present study in that authors such as Graham and Slee (2008), Slee (2006) and others working from a Foucauldian perspective have related the concepts (constructs) used by Stanovich and Jordan to the discourse(s) of inclusion. Discourses of inclusion have been characterized in Foucauldian-influenced research as either belonging to either the normative, or psychological, discourse whereby students' differences are highlighted through the use of the DSM-IV-TR and considered to be personal troubles for the individual with special education needs (i.e. pathognomonic), or as being part of the social justice discourse as the reasoning behind advocating for 'true' inclusion and inclusive practices (interventionist).

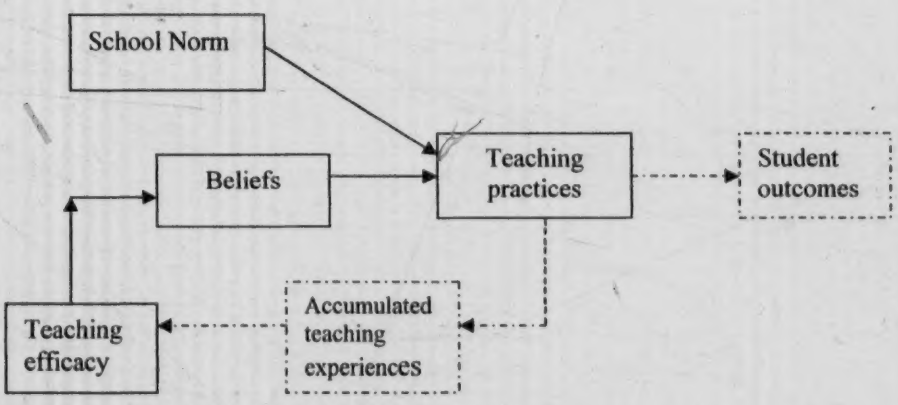
Predicting Effective Outcomes in Inclusive Elementary Classrooms

Building upon their 1998 study described above, Jordan and Stanovich (2004) developed a model that demonstrates how several constructs predict effective outcomes in inclusive classrooms. The two factors having the most direct impact on

teacher behaviour in this model are teacher beliefs and school norms. Because discourse is revealed in what one says and what one does, these constructs could also be considered to be part of the teachers' discourse. In other words, in Stanovich and Jordan's work, these two types of discursive formations have the greatest impact on teaching behaviours.

Figure 2

The model of factors which predict effective outcomes in inclusive elementary classrooms (Jordan & Stanovich, 2004)



Teachers' Perceptions of Factors Required for Successful Inclusion

Stanovich (1999) conducted focus groups with 6 teachers to determine their views on the factors that are perceived as necessary for inclusion to be a successful enterprise in their school. Three common themes emerged from the interviews: 1) The importance of building a sense of community with and between all the students in the classroom and the school; 2) a collaborative, guided discovery approach to teaching and learning, and; 3) a view of each student as an individual with unique strengths and needs. It is interesting to note that none of these factors involve specialized training or

skills held by teachers, nor do they include a focus on diagnostic criteria or specific characteristics associated with particular disabilities.

Factors That Influence Teacher Beliefs/Attitudes

Beyond those constructs addressed in Jordan & Stanovich's (2004) model, a number of factors have been found to influence the attitudes of teachers toward inclusion. Three factors that have been deemed to have the most significant impact are teacher characteristics, school environment and student characteristics (Avrimidis & Norwich, 2004; Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998).

Teacher characteristics

Several studies have explored the link between teacher characteristics and their attitudes about inclusion. These studies have focused on characteristics such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, grade level taught, exposure to disabilities and other teacher personality factors. All of these are thought to have potential impact on whether or not a teacher thinks favourably about inclusion or not.

Several studies have found that teachers with less teaching experience have a tendency to be more positive toward inclusion (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Soodak et al. (1998) found that teachers with more experience were less amenable to the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom, and Leyser et al. (1994) noted that the point where attitudes appeared to change was 14 years; teachers with less than fourteen years teaching experience were more favourable toward inclusion than those with more than 14 years experience. However, other studies have been inconclusive when comparing years of teaching experience and attitudes toward

inclusion (Avrimidis et al, 2000; Leyser, Volkan & Ilan, 1989; Rogers, 1987; Stephens & Braun, 1980).

Another teacher variable that has been found to influence teacher attitudes is grade level taught. Bunch et al. (1997) found that on a national level, secondary level educators held greater reservations regarding inclusion than those teaching at the elementary level. Similar findings were reported by Larrivee & Cook (1979), Rogers (1987), and Savage and Wienke (1989). Salvia & Munson (1989) reported that as the student's age increased, teacher attitudes became less positive about inclusion. Leyser et al. (1994) found opposite results in their study, where senior and junior high school teachers reported significantly more positive attitudes toward inclusion.

Experience of contact with children with special education needs or other persons with disabilities has been shown to impact teacher attitudes in a number of studies. Several studies have demonstrated the link between previous contact with persons with disabilities and a more positive attitude toward inclusion (Leyser & Lessen, 1985; McDonald, Birnbrauer & Swerissen, 1987; Shimman, 1990; Stainback, Stainback & Dedrick, 1984). Furthermore, these studies suggest that increased levels of exposure to disabilities is positively associated with attitudes about inclusion.

Environmental Factors

The school environment has also been found to be a factor that influences teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. Vaughn et al. (1996) found that teachers not working in inclusive environments reported negative attitudes (Vaughn et al., 1996) whereas those teaching in schools considered to be inclusive reported more positive views of inclusion (Bunch et al., 1997; Villa et al., 1996). Similarly, Villa et al. (1996)

found that teachers' support for inclusion was highly associated with their administrators' level of receptiveness for the policy and the practice of inclusion. The study also found that successful practice of inclusion became notable after a period of four to six years following implementation.

Jordan-Wilson and Silverman (1991) conducted a study where they placed teacher and principal beliefs about inclusion on a continuum from *restorative* to *preventative*. Participants who could be placed at the restorative end of the continuum believed that students with special needs should be formally assessed using norm-based tests, assigned to a category of exceptionality and placed in a suitable segregated setting. This restorative framework is associated with a negative attitude toward inclusion. Those at the preventative end of the continuum believed that some part of the difficulties experienced by the student is the responsibility of the teachers; an effort should be made at the pre-referral stage to address the problem, and the student should be placed in a general education setting with supports and accommodations as necessary. This framework is associated with a more positive attitude toward inclusion. The authors created the Elementary Teacher Interview in order to quantitatively assess teacher beliefs based on this continuum. Results showed that overall, general classroom teachers held views that were mostly restorative; significantly more so than principals. However, within-school analyses revealed that teachers' ratings on the scale correlated significantly with those of the principals. Principals and teachers from the same school, then, were consistent in their beliefs regarding inclusion, whether those attitudes were positive or negative.

A second environmental variable that has been shown to impact on teachers' attitudes toward inclusion is class size. In a study by Soodak et al. (1998), a significant relationship was found between class size and anxiety such that as class sizes grew, so did the teachers' anxiety about including a student with a disability in their class. Conflicting findings were reported by Larrivee and Cook (1979) and Bender et al. (1995), who observed no relationship between class size and teacher attitudes.

Student Characteristics

A series of studies by Cook (2001; Cook, Semmel & Gerber, 1999; Cook et al., 2000; Cook, Cameron & Tankersley, 2007) include an examination of student characteristics that impact teachers' attitudes. The measure of teacher attitudes in these studies involved the nomination of children by teachers into categories of attachment, concern, indifference, and rejection. The authors categorized students as those with hidden disabilities (e.g. specific learning disabilities, AD/HD and behaviour disorders) and those with obvious disabilities (e.g. autism, hearing impairments and orthopaedic handicaps). The results of these studies showed that teachers rejected significantly more children with hidden disabilities (31.8%) than those with obvious disabilities (16.7%). Additionally, Cook (2001) found that teachers rejected more students with severe disabilities. In their latest research, Cook, Cameron, Cook & Tankersley (2007) point out that their findings consistently show that teachers make decisions on how to act based on their feelings toward the students and that these decisions have important implications for inclusive policy and practice.

Similar results were found in a study by Soodak, Podell, and Lehman (1998), in which teachers' responses on an inclusion survey were analyzed based on two

response dimensions. The first dimension was labelled hostility/receptivity and the second, anxiety/calmness. The authors found an association between the nature of the student's disability and teacher attitudes; teachers were more hostile to the inclusion of students with cognitive disabilities or behaviour disorders and were more receptive to the inclusion of students with a hearing impairment or physical disability. Furthermore, these researchers found that teachers became less amenable to the concept of inclusion as their experience with teaching increased. Consistent with the above findings, both Wilczenski (1992) and Center and Ward (1987) reported that teachers held more positive attitudes toward the inclusion of students with physical disabilities and were more willing to make accommodations for these students than those with academic or behaviour problems.

Another study by Wolpert (2001) showed that even teachers willing to include students with cognitive disabilities, and considered to be doing so successfully, still felt that they were unprepared to do so and these teachers requested information on learning characteristics of their students with cognitive disabilities.

Summary of findings

Based on the extant research findings, it appears that few definite conclusions can be drawn when reviewing the research in the area of teacher attitudes toward inclusion. The attitudes of teachers toward students with disabilities in the general classroom have been found to be mixed: more positive regarding the concept of inclusion and more negative with regard to the realities of its practice. Teachers consistently hold more negative views of including students with certain types of disabilities, as well as more severe disabilities, particularly when it comes to

implementing inclusive education policies. Teachers' attitudes have been found to be more positive with regard to students with milder physical and learning disabilities, but are less positive toward including students with behaviour and cognitive disabilities. Consequently, it appears that policies to include all students in the regular classroom will continue to meet resistance from teachers.

It should be noted that the vast majority of the studies mentioned in this review of the literature were based upon Likert-type scales in an attempt to discern teachers' agreement or disagreement with certain statements. As is the norm for this type of positivist research, constructs were defined prior to questionnaires being administered to the teacher participants. This raises the issue of whether all the teachers questioned held the same comprehension and interpretations of specific disabilities and concepts that were used as a basis for interpreting attitudes in the studies. Very few studies in this area were qualitative in nature, resulting in a lack of depth of understanding of teachers' attitudes and understandings of inclusion as expressed by the teachers themselves.

While the existing research points to how various constructs influence teacher attitudes and practice regarding inclusion, less is known about how the historical and political contexts have influenced teachers in order to form a discourse of inclusion that may appear to be different from that of researchers and policy-makers. As we have seen throughout the previous sections, there are noticeable disjunctures between meaning and practice of inclusion for teachers. As stated by Avrimidis and Norwich (2002), the concept of inclusion is so "politically correct" (or in Foucauldian terms, the dominant discourse) that teachers may have been hesitant to disagree with the

policy, even when their practices reflect a different attitude. Avrimidis and Norwich (2002) also commented on the need for methodological variations in further studies on this topic. To extend the current knowledge of teacher attitudes toward inclusion and their relationship with the implementation of this policy, a Foucauldian approach offers a promising new way of interpreting attitudes and actions within the inclusion discourse. This approach has the potential to help determine what are the conditions that allow teachers to feel they must conform to a discourse which is positive toward inclusion on the one hand, while subverting that discourse on the other.

Foucault and Education

Since Foucault's death some twenty years ago, his work has been adopted by many disciplines as a way of examining issues in a critical and thorough manner that is not offered by other methods of analysis. Although introduced to the field of education by authors such as Walkerdine in the late 1980s, it was not until 1990 that Foucault's work began to gain wider importance in the field of education as interpreted by Ball et al. (Butin, 2006). Ball published an influential collection of essays on Foucault in 1990, thereby raising Foucault's profile within the field of education. Since that time, a number of educational researchers have begun to see in Foucault's work the possibility of using his theories and methods in order to offer a different (critical) perspective on education and educational change. The initial focus of this work has largely been on discussing the possible uses and relevance of Foucault in educational research rather than actually using Foucault's theories as a tool for research (e.g. Peters & Besley, 2007). In keeping with this focus, a recent

Canadian publication by Jardine (2007) provides a general overview of Foucauldian theories and how they may be applied to education in more practical ways.

A limited number of researchers have studied teachers from a Foucauldian perspective. As part of Ball's collection of essays, Jones (1990) published a genealogy of the urban school teacher. In this essay, Jones explores the discourse of the teacher as nurturer and moral being over time. The author argues that this image remains part of the discourse of being a good teacher even today. McWilliam (2004) takes a similar approach to analyzing the discourse of teaching in her narrative inquiry about motivation to teach, but expands upon the discussion around teacher discourse to reveal the belief held by teachers that caring about students and wanting to get to know them is "natural", just as good pedagogy is natural. Using the Foucauldian technique of reversal, McWilliam shows that this is but a discursive formation that currently exists as a result of training methods for producing "proper" teachers. As Gore (1998) notes, most individuals share similar educational experiences and are able to clearly identify student and teacher roles, thus attesting to the longevity of images of good teachers, untouched by school reforms. Gore suggests that this relative stability of the discourse of teachers is a result of largely unnoticed power relations.

Because Foucault's body of work is vast and may be applied in a variety of ways, the literature includes numerous discussions on the use of his work to analyze many different areas in the field of education: "Foucault studies in education provide tools for analysis that have inspired historical, sociological and philosophical approaches covering a bewildering array of topics…[which] provides an approach to problematising concepts and practice that seemed resistant to further analysis before

Foucault" (Peters, 2004). Based on convergent findings from an array of studies as seen in the previous section, one may surmise that research in this area has reached the stage of resistance to further analysis and the time has come to use a Foucauldian approach in order to shine a new light on this topic.

Foucault and Special Education/Inclusion

The relationship between Foucault and inclusion/special education is in its infancy, but his theories have been adopted and used by some of the most prominent authors in the field of inclusion (e.g. Allan, 1999; Skrtic, 1995; Slee, 2006). These authors have been amongst the strongest proponents of change in special education and inclusion policies. Many of Foucault's themes are highly relevant to special education, such as his work on "Otherness", his ideas on surveillance, discipline and power, as well as madness and medicine. While Foucault's work did not address special education directly, several of his studies were very much related to concepts that are used in the context of special education and inclusion. For example, Foucault's study "Madness and Civilization" is relevant to special education in that it discusses the history and state of being of mental illness. Further, his lectures on abnormality (Foucault, 1999) deal with society's view of people who are not considered "typical", providing a critical view of the exclusion and supervision of people who are considered different. According to Davidson (2003), the result of these lectures should be a new discourse of difference which makes invoking a label of "abnormal" problematic, even difficult. This is due to Foucault's methodology which follows the history of abnormality and exposes coincidences such as the opening of asylums in buildings formerly used for housing lepers and which had come into disuse

(Foucault, 2003a; p. xxv). Building upon Foucault's work on differences, a few educational theorists have used Foucauldian tools to critique special education and inclusion policies.

Thomas Skrtic, perhaps one of the most forward thinkers in the field of special education, called for reconstruction of special education when he published his seminal *Disability and Democracy* in 1995. This book merits particular attention for its important contributions to the field and for its relationship to the current research project. Drawing from a number of Foucault's theories, Skrtic presents an analysis of the discourses in special education in order to "raise doubts about the legitimacy about the field's practices and discourses, doubts that will tempt the rising generation of special educators to develop new knowledge, practices, and discourses for the future" (p.65). In order to do so, he analyzes the discourse of special education. He points out the importance of the discourses of school failure, which indicate that school failure is related to either a) an inefficient organization, or b) defective students. Skrtic explains that the first of these discourses led to more effective approaches to school management, and the second led to special education. The dominant discourse for teachers and others in the school system includes the belief that schools are rational systems, which leads to the pathologizing of students with special education needs who are unable to thrive in the system. Over time, the discourse of special education came to include the discourse of mainstreaming, then the discourse of inclusion. Meanwhile, the grounding in positivist research remained, together with a grounding in medicine and behaviourist theory that had always existed in special education. The medical and diagnostic system of "fixing" students who were pathologized remains to

this day. Furthermore, Skrtic points to the fact that theoretical and guiding assumptions failed to be questioned as the dominant discourse shifted (p. 78). Hence, although the discourse changed, insofar as the terms used to refer to concepts are different, the system reproduced itself in a new discourse. The author calls for critical analysis of the discourse using research that combines disqualified (subjugated) knowledge with critical and theoretical analyses of discourse in order to create an "expanded discourse that is both critical and comprehensible to the field," which Skrtic calls "practical criticism". The present study attempts to accomplish exactly that.

To date, little Foucauldian research has been undertaken in the field of special education and inclusion, but there seems to be a burgeoning trend toward using Foucault's theories and methodologies in special education and/or inclusion research. One of the first to undertake this task, Allan (1996; 1999) analyzed children's experiences of mainstreaming. Using a Foucauldian "box of tools," Allan analyzed the official discourse on special needs, as well as the discourses operating within schools as expressed by students and teachers. In order to get at the subjugated knowledge of the students, the researcher undertook qualitative interviews with students with and without special education needs in the mainstream classroom. Allan's study found that although students with special education needs often challenged the power structures of labelling and exclusion, teachers did not support these transgressions. Additionally, teachers maintained the disciplinary techniques of special education by ensuring that the students were unable to assert their independence by accomplishing tasks in their own way and by thwarting their efforts to blend in with other students by pointing out

their disabilities in class. Allen calls for teachers to do "ethical work" on themselves in order to examine their own ideas and beliefs with regard to their students with special education needs (Allan, 1999, p. 118).

Some very recent research has expanded upon Skrtic's and Allan's work on inclusion using a Foucauldian theoretical and methodological framework. Arnesen, Mietola and Lahelma (2007) analyzed the discourse of inclusion in Finland and Norway. Using the method of comparative ethnography, these authors found that teachers tended to describe their classrooms as a homogeneous group, but when asked to describe students individually, they employed many categorizations framed by psychological reasoning and distinctions from the norm. Thus, even though they believed they were inclusive, the teachers in this study created a division between the students with special education needs and the "normal" students by upholding expert classifications of student differences. These divisions were further exacerbated by achievement tests and teachers' held beliefs about students' innate abilities and learning styles. In this study, teachers appeared to move between two discourses: one of inclusion and one of psychological descriptions and identification of student differences.

Similarly, in her Foucauldian study of Otherness and treatment of students with behaviour difficulties in schools, Graham (2006) found that teachers in Queensland, Australia were quick to identify students with behaviour problems as being different, despite this discourse not being part of the official discourse on what qualifies as a disability in that particular school system. Graham questions the meaning of inclusion when this Otherness is so clearly part of the school system.

Finally, Graham and Slee (2008) investigated the current discourse of inclusion. These authors also point out the disjuncture between policies of inclusion and practices that reinforce identification and Otherness. Graham and Slee question what it is we want to include students into and who is at the normalized centre of the inclusive classroom. They argue that normalization results in an increase of disciplinary power, which serves to reinforce differences.

The Foucauldian studies of inclusion conducted thus far have come to similar conclusions regarding the discourses of inclusion: while inclusion is a general policy, other policies of identification serve only to reinforce Otherness and to perpetuate old discourses of difference. The current study will build on this work to investigate teachers' attitudes and beliefs and whether these challenge or support the discourses of inclusion and Otherness.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

> What I have studied are the three traditional problems: (1) What are the relations we have to truth through scientific knowledge, to those "truth games" which are so important in civilization and in which we are both subject and objects? (2) What are the relationships we have to others through those strange strategies and power relationships? And (3) what are the relationships between truth, power, and self? I would like to finish with a question: What could be more classic than these questions and more systematic than the evolution through questions one, two, and three and back to the first? I am just at this point (Foucault, 1988, p.15).

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to investigate teachers' discourse(s) of inclusion using interpretive inquiry to operationalize the Foucauldian theoretical framework, or "box of tools". Interviews formed the basis for the data analysis, framed by an historical perspective and put into a current context using existing policy documents. The following chapter describes the theoretical, methodological and ethical considerations that guided the current research.

Methodology

Interpretive Inquiry within a Foucauldian Framework

The basic goal of qualitative research is to understand and explain social phenomena. This is in keeping with Foucauldian methodology, as Foucault sought to understand and explain social phenomena, albeit from a critical perspective.

Interpretive inquiry, also known as generic qualitative research, is probably the form most commonly used in educational research (Merriam, 1992). Researchers employing interpretive inquiry as their research method strive "to write a more hopeful beginning for new stories" (Ellis, 1998a). In order for the interpretive inquiry to be considered successful, researchers must acquire knowledge that allows them to think more fruitfully about the topic than they did prior to undertaking the research (Ellis, 1998a). John K. Smith (1992) identifies interpretive inquiry as not only a practical activity but also a moral one, in that the researcher must reflect not only on the participants' words and actions, but also on her or his own.

Interpretive inquiry is very flexible and may be used with many different methodologies and framed within a particular theory (Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach & Richardson, 2005), as is the case with the present research. This flexibility of methodology and theory relates to the idea of the qualitative researcher as the "*bricoleur*" working toward creating a product, or a "*bricolage*" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). To create something new, the *bricoleur* assembles pieces of the puzzle to make a coherent whole. In Foucauldian terms, the idea of the *bricoleur* is similar to Foucault's "box of tools" in that the tools are in the box, but it is up to the researcher to put them together to not only form a coherent whole, but also to fit the needs of the questions that guide the particular study. Despite the flexibility that exists within interpretive inquiry, there remain some key components that must be present in order to ensure the quality of the research.

Key Components of Interpretive Inquiry

A qualitative researcher seeks to understand how people see, explain and describe the world they live in (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). For Foucault, this understanding takes the form of uncovering the existing discourse or discourses. Like Foucault's genealogy, interpretive inquiry helps the researcher to piece together an understanding of how parts of a phenomenon fit together to form a whole (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Merriam, 1998). Key characteristics of this form of research include description, interpretation and understanding of data, as well as the identification of recurrent patterns in the form of themes or categories (Merriam, 1998). All of these components are held together by description, which is the piece that holds the entire puzzle of the interpretive inquiry together.

Description

Description is a key component of qualitative research, both from the perspective of the participant and that of the researcher. For interpretation to be possible, qualitative data must include the description of relationships, settings and situations, systems, processes and other aspects of the phenomenon (Peshkin, 1993). Description is also important in order to convey to the reader the experience of the participant, thus allowing the reader to enter into the world of the participant(s): "the readers should have enough illustrative material to make sense of the research from their own standpoints while still understanding how the researcher could see things the way that he or she does" (Ellis, 1998b). In some cases, descriptions can be so compelling that they can incite people to make changes for the participants. In a poignant example of the effects of good description, Robert Edgerton (1967)

interviewed 48 adults with cognitive disabilities in institutions and was told of their poor conditions. This provoked some who heard about the situation to lobby the government for improved conditions on the participants' behalf (Brantlinger et al., 2005).

Descriptions, by their very nature, are created through the use of language. The researcher must be conscious that although we may share common language, words used may carry different meanings for different people. Language has a key role in description, but it can both enable and limit interpretation (Ellis, 1998b). Because qualitative research depends so much on the researcher's ability to use and interpret language, it is important to use words judiciously and check for understanding of the words that are selected so that they can be interpreted in the way that they were meant. The word *inclusion* is a clear example of a term that is used in a variety of ways: at one end of the spectrum, inclusion may mean that students are fully included in the regular classroom at all times, while at the other end, inclusion may be understood as occurring when students with disabilities attend the same school as other students without ever interacting with each other. Herein lies the importance of defining terms and constructs that are used throughout the study.

Interpretation

As Michel Foucault so fittingly put it: "We must not imagine that the world turns toward us a legible face which we would have only to decipher; the world is not the accomplice of our knowledge". Thus, interpretation of data is necessary. Because qualitative research strives to generate an understanding of the phenomenon being studied, the interpretation of data may be the most important phase of the research; it

is in this phase that understanding is built and where the researcher derives meaning from the data. Meaning can arise from the author's interpretation of data in light of an historical condition or existing policies, or in a continuing dialogue between the researcher and the participant. In the case of this Foucauldian research, data are treated as archived data and interpreted in light of the historical context, existing policies and dialogues with the participants. It should be noted that interview transcripts representing experiences and views of participants should not be essentialized as representing the participants in a static way (Davies & Davies, 2007). Rather, interviews should be treated as a snapshot of the participants' ideas at the time of the interview, which has evolved during the course of the interview itself. Additionally, Foucault's view of what Judith Butler calls the "performative force of spoken utterance" (Butler, 2004, p. 64), that is to say that the act of verbalizing one's views with the use of language reflects how the participants constitutes herself or himself within the existing social and political context (Davies & Davies, 2007).

For Foucault, an important part of interpretation is that it is done from a critical perspective. Critique is considered by some to be a subset of interpretive methodologies which include both critical analyses and discourse analyses (Brantlinger et al., 2005). Brantlinger et al. suggest that one of the benefits of using these methodologies in special education is that they "reveal how disability and professional practices are culturally constructed". Furthermore, these authors recognize discourse analysis as having value for informing practice and policy in that it may help to identify policies and practices that are not helpful, and even potentially damaging, to people with disabilities.

When interpreting data, the researcher must be able to differentiate what is or is not important to advancing knowledge in the area of study. It is the researcher's responsibility to make the "analytic scheme" obvious (Morse, 1994). That is to say that the researcher must make the conclusions drawn through analysis obvious to the reader. This is entirely compatible with Foucault's methods and specifically his notion of presenting findings without passing judgment. However, the researcher must also be aware of the analytic gaze and the authority that she or he holds and be mindful of these factors when analyzing data (Davies & Davies, 2007).

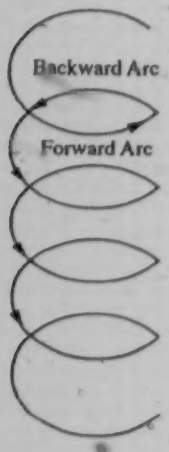
Interpretation may be viewed as a creative activity (Shliermacher & Smith as cited in Ellis, 1998b) whereby the researcher uses everything she or he knows in order to inform the interpretation of the data. Foucault certainly conducted his research in this manner, often using his knowledge of philosophy, history and linguistics in order to create a coherent whole.

Even though he resisted the label, Foucault is often described as a poststructuralist (Peters, 2004), a concept closely related to postmodernism. Qualitative research developed in the context of postmodernism, where there is an increased value placed on "grounded knowing" as a result of situated, contextualized and embodied knowledge (Ellis, 1998). This grounded knowing is inextricably linked with the process of interpretation of data. A researcher may come to grounded knowing in different ways. The process of coming to this grounded knowing may be viewed as an unfolding spiral (Ellis, 1998b).

In each loop of the spiral, the researcher returns to a new activity or a new question in order to explore the topic in a new manner (see Figure 3). With each loop,

the researcher has learned or uncovered something new and reframes the question before returning to the data with a new question, or beginning a new form of inquiry. Though each loop will be different, each one brings the researcher closer to piecing together a coherent whole by allowing him or her to see the data differently or seeing what was previously invisible within the data (Ellis, 1998b). The data analysis therefore takes on an inductive quality through the researcher's openness to uncovering something that was not previously known, or a new way of seeing a topic that has been examined in other ways. In this way, learning takes place and knowledge is advanced. Interpretation is not speculation; it is an educated and disciplined understanding of the goings-on in a particular setting that provokes "new ways of seeing and thinking within a deep sense of tradition, bringing about new forms of engagement and dialogue about the world" (Smith, 1991).

Figure 3: Interpretive Inquiry as an Unfolding Spiral (Ellis, 1998b)



Each loop in the spiral represents a separate inquiry activity within the study.

Each loop may represent a separate "data collection and analysis" activity or it may represent a return to a constant set of data with, however, a different question.

Often the question for each new loop has been influenced by what was uncovered in the inquiry represented by the previous loop.

Although the goal of interpretation is to uncover something new, this is not enough. The researcher must also have the ability to determine whether the research is complete and whether the question has been answered adequately (Packer & Addison, 1989). Furthermore, the researcher must include information about credibility and quality indicators so that the reader may evaluate the trustworthiness of the findings.

Evaluation

In qualitative research, the focus is not on generalizability of data, but rather on the accuracy of findings within the context that was studied. Many qualitative researchers are concerned with deriving universal statements of general social processes. This was also true of Foucault's work. His work did not focus on generalization of particular circumstances, but rather on discovering common discourse within which social processes could be revealed. Foucault believed that if we engage in generalizing phenomenon, we move our focus away from the "peculiarities of each specific instance and thereby weaken our ability to understand and eliminate it" (Jardine, 2005, p.31). A study that cannot be generalized necessarily generates new questions to be asked about the phenomenon. By focusing on the particular, it is also possible that qualitative researchers are therefore under less pressure to produce certain types of results and more free to find the essence of the data.

Another key to evaluating the research is acknowledging the importance of the micro-macro relationships. In order to understand the "whole", the researcher must understand the parts (Ellis, 1998b). The researcher must ask: "What is the big picture of which little things speak?"(Smith, 1991). Parts of the data can only be understood

in relationship to the other parts and to the whole itself. It is therefore important that the researcher recognize that only through knowing the whole can one then begin to focus on separate parts. One of the advantages of the Foucauldian methodology used for the present study is that it provides a more holistic view of the data through the analysis of key documents, in addition to interviews, all within an historical context.

Role of the Researcher

When undertaking an interpretive inquiry, a researcher needs to develop a tolerance for ambiguity and be an "adept but fumbling detective" (Diamond & Mullen, 1999). Guided by theory and a strong sense of the previous research within the field of study, the researcher can more easily recognize patterns and relationships that others have noted, as well as new patterns not previously detected. The application of a theoretical framework can inform analysis and provides guidance throughout the research project (Ellis, 1998b). As previously described, this research is guided by the theoretical framework that is Foucault's "box of tools" for conducting research.

It is a common practice for qualitative researchers to identify their subjectivities and biases. This process is what is termed "bracketing". Rather than ignoring pre-understandings, they should be identified because they can shape the investigation and its findings; data may look different depending on "where you are sitting, how things look to you" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1991). Similarly, Foucault's notion of the "practices of the self" is consistent with the current practice within educational research of bracketing, or identifying one's biases. Ahern (1999) identifies bracketing as a means of demonstrating validity in the research and as a practice that may enable the researcher to be more alert to themes "in common with the broader

human experience". Similar to Ellis' (1998b) concept of loops in qualitative research, Ahern invites qualitative researchers to continue exploring their feelings about the topic in a reflexive manner throughout the research process and to consult with colleagues if there is the possibility of being blocked (i.e. at an impasse with the data; unable to continue). She then recommends reframing any blocks in order that they may be transformed into opportunities. In Ellis' concept of loops, this would be equivalent to a new loop.

Research as Critique

Foucault is thought by some to be the originator of critical research methodology (Hook, 2007). His research "tools" were methods used in order to change his thinking about his topic in order to analyze it in a way that had not been previously done. For Foucault, however, critique is not necessarily negative: "A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practice that we accept rests." (Foucault, 1990, p. 154). By so doing, Foucault was able to demonstrate how accepted social norms had been created throughout history, rather than being accepted facts that had evolved in a continuous fashion.

Undertaking Foucauldian Research

Although much has been written about the use of Foucauldian methods, few authors have given direct advice on using them. However, a recent publication by Mills (2004) presents six pointers to help guide researchers using a Foucauldian framework as their chosen methodology: 1) Draw on archives to bring attention to

areas of the discourse that would not normally be thought of as important; 2) Be sceptical and be critical of your own views and avoid value judgements of the past; 3) Don't make second order judgements based on others' theories; 4) Look for contingencies rather than causes and don't oversimplify reasons for conditions that lead to certain events or actions; 5) Investigate a problem rather than a subject by allowing the "problem" to lead the investigation, and 6) Don't overgeneralize from your findings, but make statements about the particular event rather than grand statements about the culture (Mills, 2004, pp. 111-116).

Discourse Analysis.

There is not a single technique to analyze discourse in a Foucauldian manner, nor is there a prescribed procedure available to guide the detailed process that discourse analysis requires (Potter & Wetherell, 1994, p. 59). For this reason, some have called Foucauldian theory "dangerous" (O'Farrell, 2005) because a researcher using Foucault's theoretical framework has to walk the line between Foucault's resistance to being prescriptive, on the one hand, and satisfying the rigours necessary for accomplishing academic work on the other (Graham, 2005a). However, Foucault's own analyses of discourse can shed light on some of the elements that he believed were required for carrying out this type of work effectively. Although he never encouraged others to follow his particular methodology, Foucault explained that his own practice of discourse analysis included three parts: first, a history of the discourse as a "monument", rather than as a means of explaining it; then, a description of the conditions under which the discourse has been created; and finally an attempt to relate

the discourse back to "the practical field in which it is deployed" rather than to the individual or individuals that produced it (Foucault, 1996, p. 40).

Thus, Foucault's method for analyzing discourse includes an historical perspective in order to identify any shifts which have taken place over time. The analysis itself explicates the conditions which allow for the discourse under consideration to exist, including practices, policies, other related discourses, and structures that maintain and even strengthen its meaning. In other words, the researcher shows how the discourse frames the statements that have been made in order for those statements to be sustained (see Graham, 2005a for an explanation of her use of Foucault in this way). The discourse is then situated within the field of practice in order to gain a better understanding of its effects, without seeking to understand the intentions of the individuals making the statements. In summary, a Foucauldian analysis of discourse should include a firm grounding in historical events; a description which goes beyond the words used by individuals to examine the policies, structures and other conditions that form and maintain the discourse; and finally, an exploration of the practical effects of the discourse.

Methods

> If one is interested in doing historical work that has political meaning, utility and effectiveness, then this is possible only if one has some kind of involvement with the struggles taking place in the area in question. I tried first to do a genealogy of psychiatry because I had a certain amount of practical experience in psychiatric hospitals and was aware of the combats, the lines of force, the tensions and points of collision which existed there. My historical work was undertaken only as a function of those conflicts. The problem and the stake there was the possibility of a discourse which would be both true and strategically effective, the possibility of a historical truth which could have a political effect (Foucault, 1980, p. 64).

Introduction to the Researcher

Just as Foucault stated his reasons for undertaking research on a particular topic, I shall make clear why I have chosen the topic of inclusion, an area in which I have involvement at various levels, practical experience, and an awareness of the conflicts that exist within the field. In short, this research topic is one that I consider to be of great importance, both from a theoretical and practical standpoint. As in all qualitative research, it is important to be self-reflective when undertaking Foucauldian work. Foucault himself emphasized the importance of self-awareness for the researcher, that is, awareness of on one's identity as a researcher (Peters, 2004). Here I will endeavour to bracket my own knowledge and experiences as they relate to my study of the discourse of inclusion.

As a former teacher, I know the challenges involved when students with special education needs are included in the regular classroom. Having taught special education classes, I also know firsthand how students with disabilities can be excluded from the larger school community when they are schooled in a segregated setting. At the same time, I observed my students in the segregated setting making enormous improvements in their learning and emotional health as a result of being in a smaller classroom and having the benefit of intensive supports. This leaves me a little conflicted with regard to the *academic* benefits of inclusion, though I fervently believe in the individual and societal benefits of including students with special education needs in all aspects of school life, including academic aspects.

My assumption based on conversations with the many teachers I have met, is that most special education teachers are more open to inclusion and willing to do what is required to make it work. On the other hand, I have met many regular classroom teachers and several school administrators who are clearly not open to inclusion and who would rather direct a student with special education needs toward a segregated class or school. Herein lies one of the "tensions" Foucault refers to in the quotation at the start of this section. Through my interactions with teachers in my various roles in the education system, I have become aware of the tension between those who favour inclusion as the *only* way to educate students with special education needs, those who favour segregated settings as the best choice, and all those who believe that a hybrid of both is the most appropriate way to meet needs. In addition to teachers and administrators, there are many parent and activist groups advocating strongly for one particular way of educating students with special education needs or another.

I also clearly remember what it is like to be a teacher and understand the enormity of the daily demands put on a teacher's time. I understand that to be a good teacher, one must dedicate enormous amounts of time to the tasks that favour the most appropriate learning environment for students. I also know that teaching is not necessarily valued by society, that public perception is often that teaching is not "serious" work and that teachers are rewarded with far more holidays than most people working other types of jobs.

After teaching for several years, my career in education shifted into a more academic role when I began to do graduate work. During this time, I had the opportunity to work as a supervisor of student teachers. This provided me with a new perspective on teaching and on inclusion. Through this experience, I observed many students with special education needs being treated in a variety of ways by teachers and student teachers alike. Through their actions, these experienced and less experienced teachers demonstrated their attitudes toward students who might be considered different. Some of these experiences proved very difficult, and at times I found myself acting as somewhat of an advocate for the student by raising the student teacher's awareness of that student's difficulties or special education needs.

Though my teaching career is in the past, I continue to work in the field of special education as a Program Manager with Alberta Education. This puts me in a potential position of power with respect to the teachers in the study. I have been careful, when contacting teachers, not to use my Alberta government email address or to mention my position other than student researcher. Although it is possible that some of the teachers recognized my name from teachers' conferences and other provincial

special education events, none of them raised the question. Through my work, I have spoken to many parents of students with special education needs whose experiences in the school system have illustrated very negative attitudes toward their children on the part of teachers and I have had the opportunity to assist parents who were greatly distressed about their child's treatment or placement. While most of these parents' struggles have been with school administrators, many began with teachers who were unwilling to take responsibility for all the students in their class, regardless of level of functioning or ability. As I proceeded through the analysis of the teacher data for the current research, I was cognizant of my previous experiences with teachers and how this might affect the way I saw the data.

My current position also provides me with the potential for influencing others who have the ability to create change at the level of government. Once this research project is complete, I will be presenting it to my colleagues in government, some of whom are the main decision-makers with regard to special education. By presenting my findings, I have the possibility of influencing these people's thoughts on the topic. Additionally, this project is timely, because the Ministry of Education is currently undertaking a large project to reflect upon and renew how special education needs are met in the province of Alberta.

Broader Context

The data for this project originated from the larger, completed "Inclusion Across the Lifespan" project. This project was undertaken both in Alberta and Prince Edward Island, but the PEI data were not included in the present study. The Alberta teacher data that formed the basis of this inquiry are the archived teacher data which

had not been previously analyzed. The larger project focused on the inclusion of students with developmental disabilities. Teacher data were collected to support other data, but were substantial enough to stand alone. An initial thematic analysis of the data provided an initial impression of the teachers' views and provoked a number of questions, which led the way into subsequent loops of the unfolding spiral. The following description of data collection refers to the larger project.

Recruitment of participants occurred through communication with community agencies and school boards throughout Alberta. Prior to communication with any community source, proper ethics approval was sought. Each cooperating agency or school was asked to distribute information packages regarding the project to potential interested parties. The information package contained a letter of information for the individual, as well as accompanying consent forms. Stamped envelopes were provided for potential participants to mail in their consent form. Thirty-six families from various communities across Alberta volunteered to participate in the project. All families had at least one family member with a mild-moderate developmental disability who acted as the key participant in the research. After the key participants were identified, the teachers and teaching assistants were contacted and asked to participate. Informed Consent was obtained from all parties before the study proceeded. A total of 36 participants/families participated in this study.

The teachers of each of the school-aged participants still in school were interviewed. In total, 14 teachers were interviewed by a research assistant. Interviews were approximately one hour long. Teachers were informed of their choice not to participate or to withdraw from the project at any time. The teachers provided

information regarding the inclusion of the student or students with cognitive disabilities, which was the major theme of the larger research project. These teacher interviews form the basis of the analysis of teacher attitude about, and discourse of inclusion. The teacher data will act as a basis for determining how teachers currently view inclusion, what they do to actively encourage inclusion and how these two factors translate into their discourse. A thematic analysis of the archived data using qualitative analysis software allow for the discovery of major themes in the teachers' thoughts, attitudes and actions toward the inclusion of their students with developmental disabilities. These themes will be set into the current political and historical context of inclusion, employing elements of the Foucauldian methods of archaeology (a descriptive approach to history to inform discourse analysis) and genealogy (power/knowledge as revealed in the current, ongoing nature of the discourse) to analyze the current state of teacher attitudes on inclusion and how these emerged from specific historical social conditions (see Kendall & Wickham, 1999).

Introduction to the Participants

A total of 14 teachers of students with mild or moderate developmental at eight elementary schools in Alberta participated in the study disabilities participated in the study. This comprises all of the teachers interviewed in Alberta as part of the larger study, Inclusion Across the Lifespan. The teachers held varying levels of teaching experience, from being in their first year of teaching, to twenty years or more of teaching experience. Most of the teachers had previous knowledge and experience in special education. Some of the teachers taught special education (segregated) classes, but most taught regular "inclusive" classrooms; however, their definitions of inclusion

varied and did not always align with the definition of the term used for this research, as will be discussed in the following two chapters. A detailed description of the participants, their educational and teaching backgrounds, and their current teaching assignments follows. These serve to situate the reader, rather than to emphasize the "identity" of the participants (Davies & Davies, 2007). It should be noted that when the accounts are presented thematically in the next chapter, the identities of the teachers remain largely unknown, unless the teacher herself has used the student's name in her account. Students' names have also been changed throughout.

Arthur's Teacher

Arthur's teacher's main background is home economics. She holds an education degree in fashion and foods, and a number of years ago was asked to teach art because she had several courses in, and related to, art. Although she did not share the exact number of years she has been teaching, Arthur's teacher said: "And I've been at this school for many, many years; I tell the kids a hundred years. So a long time."

Bradley and Andrea's Teacher

Bradley and Andrea's teacher was a part-time teacher in her school, sharing her assignment with another teacher. Although she had courses in counseling, she did not have a background in special education or disabilities. She was placed as a teacher in a segregated class by her principal, who believes that any teacher can teach special education. Bradley and Andrea's teacher was mentored by her co-teacher, who has a Master's degree in Special Education. Thanks to this mentorship, Bradley and Andrea's teacher was able to quickly learn about disabilities and was able to find

support and information from her co-teacher. At the time of the interview, Bradley and Andrea's teacher had been teaching the segregated class for two years.

Christopher's Teacher

Christopher's teacher had been teaching for seven years at the time of the interview. She had taught in junior high for six years, and one year at the elementary school level, teaching Grade 6. Throughout her seven years of teaching, Christopher's teacher had students with special education needs in her class, from very mild to more severe. She had been a regular education teacher until the year we interviewed her. She also held the position of special education facilitator in her school, meaning that she had additional responsibilities relating to the coordination of special education services in her school. Christopher's teacher always intended to be a special education teacher, and this was the first opportunity that she had to do so. Her younger brother has Down Syndrome, so Christopher's teacher always wanted to work with students like him.

Caleb's Teacher

Caleb's teacher is a Kindergarten teacher with nine years' experience. She holds a degree in physical education and a Bachelor of Education specializing in elementary education with a focus on Kindergarten. All of her teaching experience has been at the Kindergarten level. Her Kindergarten class is considered a regular classroom.

Clare and Tyson's Teacher

Clare and Tyson's teacher has been teaching for seven years. She taught Kindergarten for four years and Grade 1 for three years. Throughout her seven years

of experience, Clare and Tyson's teacher taught a variety of students, many with varying levels of special education needs. Her grade one class is a regular classroom with students with special education needs included in the classroom. She teaches a class of sixteen students, including one with a severe behaviour disability in addition to Clare and Tyson.

Colin and Evan's Teacher

Colin and Evan's teacher has a great deal of teaching experience; she has been teaching for twenty-eight years. She has taught every grade from kindergarten to Grade 10 in a small, rural community. She currently teaches in a segregated class containing students with a variety of disabilities. She describes her vast experience thus:

> My first interest—I did a master's degree in English as a second language, and I had taught that area in terms of children and adults. I have been a resource room teacher, I've taught regular classrooms, and I have taught this classroom. This will be my eighth year in this particular classroom. In terms of experience, as I said, I have had adults and every group from kindergarten up to Grade 10 and almost all ability levels. And in this particular class, because it's a small community, we have children of many disabilities that are in this classroom.

Darren's Teacher

Another teacher with a great deal of experience, Darren's teacher has been teaching for thirty-three years, mostly at the junior-senior high school levels. Her teaching career began in a small school, Kindergarten to Grade 12, where she taught

Grade 4 science up to Math 30. For over twenty years, her focus was Grade 7/8 math, and then in 1990 she moved into an administrative role in her school. She became the assistant principal, but always continued to teach. She now teaches Math for struggling students at the high school level.

Joey's Teacher

Joey's teacher considers herself to be a bit of a late bloomer. She began working in the public and the private sectors for a while and then decided to go into teaching. She has been teaching for eight years, teaching Kindergarten for seven of those years. In her words, she: "got out [laughter], and I'm in Grade 1 now. So it's good to have the same kids, because I can see the growth—". As a result of moving from teaching Kindergarten to grade one, Joey's teacher had most of the same students for a second year, including Joey.

Jonathan's Teacher

Jonathan's teacher has been teaching for eighteen years, the majority of those years in Grade 6. She lives and teaches in a small rural community. She currently teaches a Grade 5/6 class, which she considers to be inclusive, even though Jonathan is included in the classroom only intermittently throughout each day.

Jana's Teacher

Jana's teacher holds a degree in Elementary Education, with a minor in special education. Although she began studying English rather than special education, she chose to study special education for practical reasons; she knew she would have students with special education needs in her future classrooms, and she wanted to be

prepared. She has enjoyed learning about special education needs and is interested in pursuing a Master's in psychology in the near future.

Jana's teacher taught a variety of grade levels, as low as Grade 2 and up to junior high. She also taught in a highly academic private school. She taught in various areas around the province, and Jana's teacher's nine years of teaching experience have varied greatly. Her current assignment is in a segregated special education classroom where she teaches math and language arts to a small class of eight students from Grades 3 to 6 who are pulled out of their other classes for parts of the day.

Kate's Teacher

Kate's teacher has a degree in Secondary Education, with a major in mathematics and a minor in special education. Kate's teacher has specialized in teaching special education and since the start of her career seven years ago, she has taught special education in some form or another. Starting out in an Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) seven years ago, she then moved to a school for students with learning disabilities where all academic courses were taught. Rounding out her experience, she taught in a modified program, then back to IOP, then to a behaviour class. She now teaches in an Opportunity class for students with cognitive disabilities. Before becoming a teacher, Kate's teacher worked with various community organizations helping students with a variety of disabilities.

Martha's Teacher

Martha's teacher, in her fifth year of teaching, teaches in a Special Needs Opportunity Program. She began her career teaching regular Grade 6 and Grade 8 classes and changed schools to teach special education. Although special education

was not her first choice of teaching assignments, she does hold a minor in educational psychology and special education in addition to being an elementary generalist, so the principal at her school thought she would be a suitable candidate for teaching special education. She ended up enjoying special education tremendously, so that she has stayed in the same position for three years. Her experience in the regular classroom included students of varying abilities, some mild learning disabilities, one student who had severe fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, and another student with vision and reading problems.

Tara's Teacher

Tara's teacher began teaching in 1977 and taught Grade 4 for four-and-a-half years. She was a stay-at-home mom for a number of years, then returned teaching ten years ago. Tara's teacher explains that in the past, she had only dealt with students with mild learning difficulties. In recent years, she has had students with autism in her class, and Tara was the first student with a cognitive disability.

Tom and Maxine's Teacher

Tom and Maxine's teacher has had wide experience. She began working as a teacher's aide for ten years. The personnel at the school where she worked encouraged her to pursue her teaching degree, so she did. She specialized in individual differences. She has been teaching now for nearly twenty years. She immediately got a job teaching IOP and gifted students in the same school, in addition to English Language Arts. Then, Tom and Maxine's teacher was asked if she would help with a new Life Skills program. Although surprised by the slow pace of the students' learning, she describes how she quickly discovered her mission for the students in the program:

> I fell in love with the personalities of the students, and I found out that—when I met them, they were standing with their heads down, cloistered in the hallway, and feeling very different. So I set my objective to making them feel like everyone else. So because it's called the Gaining Occupational Life Skills Program, I decided that I would make them as well adjusted as they could to life on the outside, in the general community, and have them as employable as they could be and as independent as they could be because that was the nature of the program, and to make them feel really good about themselves. And so those were sort of my objectives. So I came with that background, and here's where I am today. I've done this now for about ten years.

Procedure

The present study examined teacher attitudes towards inclusion as well as elements of teachers' classroom practice in order to add to the discourse on inclusion. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with teachers and included questions related to attitudes about inclusion, as well as questions specific to particular students and practices to support inclusion. Teachers were interviewed in person in their classrooms by a graduate student and the interviews were recorded. To supplement personal interviews, teachers were given the opportunity to respond to further questions electronically. All teacher responses (interview transcripts and electronic responses) were coded and organized into major and minor themes using a qualitative research software package, beginning with general themes about inclusion, then

moving on to a framed analysis using Foucault's theories. These analyses were shown to two other researchers in order to ensure a consistency of understanding.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers in order to examine their attitudes toward inclusion and the discourses that (in)form those attitudes, with a particular focus on their included students with mild-moderate cognitive disabilities. Personal interviews were supplemented by written comments sent electronically, which allowed teachers to respond to further questions about their feelings about inclusion and about ideas of fairness or equality/equity with regards to inclusion. Although not all of the participants were reachable by email, a number of additional comments were collected.

Analysis

The analysis of interview transcripts used in this study was based on an inductive approach to identify patterns in the data by assigning thematic codes. "Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (Patton, 1980, p. 306). Thematic analysis of the interview transcripts was conducted using a software package specifically designed for the purpose of analyzing qualitative data, namely NUDiST (N6) package for qualitative analysis. This method of analysis is fundamental to qualitative inquiry as it allows the researcher to identify common categories and themes within the data and to more easily identify the most salient and pertinent parts of the data. In the case of the present research, the data were relatively complex and initial analysis resulted in over

25 themes. This process is consistent with Ellis' (1998) loops in involved in performing an interpretive inquiry and represented the first two loops of the inquiry.

Once the data were initially analyzed to identify major themes, another analysis was performed with specific Foucauldian themes in mind. This phase represented a third loop. Then, to frame the statements made by teachers, Alberta Education documents were analyzed to situate the teachers' discourse. Lastly, the data were examined again for the purpose of verifying assumptions and conclusions.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter is comprised of descriptive summaries of the main ideas and themes found upon analyzing the teacher data. The first section of this chapter presents general findings of the teachers' attitudes about inclusion in order to provide the context for subsequent analyses. This is an iterative interpretation in that it summarizes the essential elements and outlines the most salient themes that emerged from the data (Piantanida & Garman, 1999, p. 253). The second section of the chapter is comprised of results framed within Foucauldian notions of discourse, surveillance, Otherness, normalization and governmentality are presented. This is a framed interpretation, meaning that analysis was performed within a specific (Foucauldian) framework (Piantanida & Garman, 1999, p. 253). It should be noted that in some cases, teachers' comments may overlap those in other sections, or may be repeated when they are relevant to both the general section on inclusion, and the more specific Foucauldian analysis.

Where teacher, student, or teaching assistant names are mentioned in these accounts, they have been changed to ensure the privacy of all those involved. It should be noted that where teachers' interviews included grammatical or other errors, they were left intact in order that the teachers' voices may be heard as they meant them. Teachers' comments are used as pertinent examples of a specific theme or discourse, therefore the specific speaker is not always identified. Teachers are identified only when the student or students are mentioned in the interview, or by level taught or years of experience where these identifying factors are relevant to the account. The

final section of the chapter consists of the analysis of key government documents that inform the teachers' discourse of inclusion.

Major Emergent Themes

In the following section, I provide excerpts from the major themes that emerged from the data.

Flexible Definitions of Inclusion

Many of the teachers in the present study defined inclusion in a much more flexible way than the definition used both for the purpose of this study (including interviews) and in the education literature as presented in Chapter 2. Jonathan's teacher considered her student included even though he spent half the day with her in the regular classroom:

> So I think inclusion, I mean, we have to talk about, he is in the Resource Room for half the day, included in a smaller group. I still consider that inclusion in a lot of ways, whereas coming into your Grade 5 room, I mean, it could have been a 5/6 split for the entire day. That's what it was looking at, and that was a huge group, and I would think that we would have had many more challenges in the large group versus in the smaller group. I think because the students know him so well and the teachers are starting to get to know him more and more and see him in the hallways and different things like that, but his challenge is going to be retaining friends, because what's happening is, the level is getting further and further apart. They're Grade 5 and 6, and Jonathan still enjoys the play mode, and some see it as more immature, and I think

> that's going to be a challenge that Jonathan's going to see in the future, is that—no one's mean to him, which is wonderful. Well, he's not mean to other people either, so I think that that's awesome—

Another teacher defined inclusion as the possibility for a person with a disability to meet their goals:

> A [colleague] has a teenage daughter who attends [a segregated program]. She thrives in an atmosphere where she is surrounded by people who care about her and make her feel as though she can accomplish her goals. Some people may call this segregation, but I call it inclusion. … Inclusion is about everyone and I, personally, don't think that just having all students lumped together in one classroom is actually creating a better learning environment for anyone.

One of the special education teachers spoke of going against the trend of inclusion:

> I'm just trying to think how to word it. The trend, I think, somewhat, in some places [laughs]—how's that for vague?—but in some schools they think that it's necessary to have full inclusion, and I think we just need to recognize the success and the positive effects on her self-esteem that a setting like this has. Now, we have the luxury, if you will, of having the blended program and having the connection with the regular-stream classroom, and her success has been due to the efforts of those homeroom teachers as well to bring that in. There are still the frustrating moments along the way, and there's [sic] been times when we've had to sit down and talk through how to make it work in that setting. Do you know? Or "Jillian, can you take another look at this assignment? We've tried it three or four times, and it's not working." And I'm

very open to those possibilities, and it can very much turn around a negative situation and turn it into a learning experience. So I can't really say that one works better than the other; I think it's the support of both that really has an impact on her day-to-day success level. Does that make sense?

Another teacher spoke of her student's activities in the regular classroom as inclusion:

I have him basically so that he has structure every morning. So he comes into my room, so that he can hear what the announcements are; he gets himself ready for the day. And that's the inclusion part that we want him as a whole class. He has phys. ed. with all of the students, and so sometimes that falls in first period; sometimes it's second period. And the other part of the day he goes down to the Resource Room. So we just felt that it was necessary for him to come, touch base with us, do O Canada, find out what the announcements are as something that he needs to know each morning. And then he comes at noon hour, because we need a place to make sure that he knows he eats [at] lunch hour, [because] lunch hour is every day, so he comes to my room for the noon hour. And then two days a week he comes for the last two periods of the day with me as well. The rest of the time he's in [a special program].

When asked whether students were included in the school as a whole, the teachers' varying definitions of the concept were once again revealed:

Interviewer: Do you feel that Arthur was included in the school environment as a whole?

Teacher: Yes, mm-hmm—as much as possible. He always had kids around him, and mainly his two main friends. But he was just part of the gang. He

wouldn't participate in Student Council activities and things where it took a lot of interaction, but he was never just left alone. Well, I shouldn't say that. Jane at first would go to classes with him and so on, but then later on she gave him some independence: "Okay, I'll meet you in the next class." She sent him on...

A teacher of a segregated class spoke of the activities that her students with disabilities were invited to participate in:

I: And how do you feel that they are included in the school?

T: Yes, like I said, it's kind of like a hit and miss. Quite often they're included. So for choir, like I said, or running club, they're all invited to come out. I find that most often they don't. We have a few that come to choir, but none of them come to running club. Oh, I'm trying to think of some other extracurricular things that we have. Computer club or homework club or anything like that, they're invited to go, but we don't have any of the kids from here that actually go and do that.

I: They choose not to?

T: Yes. So I'm not sure. I've tried to mention it to them to go and to do this, and we've just started a book club that I'm hoping that some of them will go and do. And so I don't know. With the book club, just as an example, it would have to be modified for them there as well, right? So all the other kids would read a novel, and then they'd come back and talk about what they read, whereas our kids, it would have to be read to them, which doesn't make a difference, but maybe they feel that it does, and that's why they don't want to come; I don't know. But they are included; they are asked to come to all that

stuff. There's a few things where they aren't, but most of the stuff they're invited to come to, and they just don't, so we're trying to push that a little bit more this year to get them out there and doing those things, yes.

A Kindergarten teacher suggested that her student was included in the school as a whole as a result of being well-known:

I: And do you feel Caleb's included in the school as a whole?

T: He goes to the library with us, so he knows the librarian, or he recognizes her. And he's got her picture that he takes with him when we go to library; it's a photograph, so he sees who he's going to be with in the afternoon. We're there for about half an hour. We go to computer lab; I take them there. Of course, everything's one-on-one, hand over hand, right? And when his attention is not there or he needs a break, away they go. So he… [pause]. Oh, music… There's a music teacher in the school, and what happens is, she gives me my prep time, so the kids have a music class with her twice a week. So I think in the beginning it was just too much for him to introduce that as well, so that's another face—Mrs. Albertson—that he has to know. And she plays the piano with them….We all see the kids [with special education needs], because they need to break from the classroom environment. And everybody says hello to the different children, so he's known.

A number of teachers spoke of students with disabilities being included when they had the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. One spoke of concerts and a family gym night:

I: Did you feel that Clare and Tyson were included in the whole school atmosphere?

T: I think so, yes, yes, I think— Yes. Yes, they did the Christmas concert and all the things that the rest of the class would.

I: Did they take part in any extracurricular activities?

T: Yes, they did.… [They attended] a program that's— Like a family gym night that they would come to, and they were quite excited about them. Yes, Tyson loved gym. [laughs] He loved to move, and he loved gym. That was the one time he flew out of his desk, when you said "It's gym." [laughter] And those were very physically active. [They] liked gym and liked to play games and had good sportsmanship; very good that way. Yes, [they] loved gym and did do gym nights.

Kate's teacher spoke of special activities at the school:

I: Do you feel that Kate's included in the school?

T: As much as we can right now, I think she is. I guess that we've chatted with Mom about dances; we've got her in choir. She really wants to be in choir; that was huge for her. She would have died if there was no choir.

T: … So I'm glad they found somebody that could [do choir]. She's from another school, but the teacher comes here on those days and does lunch with the kids, so that's awesome that she can be integrated with—and there's no aide with her; she's there by herself; she's integrated completely with the kids… she has to go there by herself; she comes back to the class by herself.

> The dance, like I said, she was great. She needed a little bit of guidance, but I did it with peers; there were no adults following. I knew where she was all the time because I was paranoid, but [laughter] with winter all the time I just kept an eye, and I knew where she was at all times. When it comes to assemblies, when it comes to any school events, she really enjoys participating in everything. Halloween, there was a Halloween activities in the gym, and there were teachers in there. We sent her in with her money and said, "If you want to go play some games—" and she did; she went and played some games. The atmosphere in the school is awesome because they realize there are students that need a little more attention in certain areas. Other students have amazing strengths, and some have amazing needs, so everyone's really patient with them. It's the only time that I have fears, is the hallways during lunch or changing of classes, but that's because there's so many kids in the hall.

Some teachers spoke of their students' desire to be more included:

> T: Including in school? Now, how do you mean by that? We've sort of talked around. He's included in school in curriculum; he's given the same curriculum as other kids with some accommodations, whether it be extra time or that kind of thing. We try to include him in activities. Do the kids really include him? Probably not as much as he would like, although, yes, he is over in the gym at noon hour playing three-on-three basketball with a group. Yes, he is in the church group; he's included. I mean, if you talk community sort of things, yes, he is included in activities that occur; probably not as much as he would like. Does he get to play on the foosball table? Yes, he does on occasion; probably

not as much as he'd like. But that's probably no different than many kids. So yes and no. [laughter]

I: If he had his way it would be all of the time.

T: Yes.

I: But you see it as being adequate now?

T: Yes, I see it as being—yes, I think he's doing all right. I think he's enjoying school. He's got some pluses here; it's not like he hates to come to school. He misses very little school, actually. What else can I tell you? [pause] Yes, I can't think of anything else. I mean, in instances he is included, but probably not to his liking and not to the level that he would wish.

Attitudes About Inclusion

The teachers in the study revealed a variety of attitudes toward inclusion. In accordance with previous literature on teacher attitudes, these will simply be reported here as positive, negative or mixed.

Positive Attitudes Toward Inclusion

A number of teachers demonstrated attitudes which could be construed as being very positive about including students with special education needs in their classroom. Many of those who demonstrated positive attitudes were very passionate about the benefits inclusion provides for all students. A younger teacher was strongly in favour of inclusion:

I think inclusion is about good teaching. Some teachers I see complaining about not having the time to do this and that. Guess what? Everyone's busy these days so why should teachers be any different? If you're a good teacher,

> you can include all your students and you can make sure that they get what they need. Otherwise, why am I here? That's what makes me want to keep teaching from one day to the next and from one year to the next, the idea that I can make a difference in a student's life.

Another teacher argued for more emphasis on students rather than curriculum:

> We need to remember that every student we have is going to learn at a different pace and in different ways than all of the other students in our classroom. We need to open to a child-centered atmosphere instead of just a curriculum-centered atmosphere and this will help in accommodating all of our students.

A teacher with many years of experience reflected on the possibilities of inclusion for raising expectations of students with special education needs:

> You never know how kids are going to turn out, so I think you have to give them all the benefit of the doubt. When I was a young teacher, I taught some kids I thought were lazy and would never make it. Now one student that I thought that about is really successful and makes more money in a week than I make in a couple months! That was an awakening for me. You can't judge the kids by how they are now or by how they are coded and think that they're destined to be one way or another—life just doesn't work out that way.

A number of teachers spoke of the benefits of inclusion for students with and without special education needs:

> I believe that it is very important to include all types of children within the classroom. Children without special needs need to be aware of children with

needs. It allows mainstream students to see a different side of children with special needs. It makes them look at all children in the same way. It becomes something natural and something that is not seen as being strange. We try to include special needs students into everyday life. Why should the classroom be any different?

Negative Attitudes Toward Inclusion

Some teachers were negative toward inclusion. The teachers who taught specialized segregated classes tended to demonstrate more negative attitudes toward including students with special education needs in the regular classroom. Many of these teachers thought that their students with developmental disabilities would be forgotten or "lost" in a regular, inclusive classroom:

> I do; I honestly do [feel this classroom is the best place for Kate] just because of, like I said, her attention needs. If she was in a class of thirty, she'd be conked in the back of that classroom twenty-four/seven, I bet you any money, unless she was doing something with an aide one-on-one constantly. So integrated into a regular class, if she was just sitting with thirty around her, even if it's noisy, if it's not stimulating her personally, if she's not involved in storytelling or reading or doing—even in assignments she'll look and be like, Huh! No, not interested…

Another teacher of a segregated class agreed:

> So that I see benefits in integration, and I see benefits in segregation. I try to make this as normal a class as possible, whatever normal is, so that some of these kids might move, and they may not be in a special class. So they may

> have to learn what it's like to sit in a desk, face the board, do what the rest of the kids are doing at some level, so that's kind of where my perspective comes from for segregation.

Another teacher spoke of how her student appeared different when she was in the segregated classroom, compared to the portion of her day spent in a larger regular classroom:

> Because she just shines when she comes in here. She's all excited; she knows exactly what she needs to do. Do you know, sometimes I think she doesn't feel that independent perhaps in a class of thirty, but when she can come here, she kind of gets to sparkle or shine and feel really good, and she can see what she's doing. She can see her progression, and that kind of boosts her enough to get through some of those difficult moments that sometimes do occur with the learning, because there are some concepts that are above her head. You know what I mean?

Mixed Attitudes Attitudes Toward Inclusion

Many of the teachers in the study expressed mixed feelings about inclusion. An experienced teacher saw the benefits of inclusion, but only for some students and not others:

> I have seen many different types of disabilities. I have worked with kids who are in regular classrooms and segregated classrooms. I don't think that inclusion is the best option for all children. I think that it is a wonderful thing for some. I believe that we have a responsibility to put children in an environment which is best for them and their development. Many children with

> special needs will never learn to read or write and follow "typical" curriculum. School for them is a completely different experience. I personally think that these kids should be in an environment where they can be focused on reaching their full potential. I have also worked with children where inclusion has been a wonderful experience for them but are starting to reach the point where the other children are starting to significantly mature past them. I think it is important to look at the situation and decide what is best for *all* the children in the class. Is the student with special needs going to distract the rest of the class from working? Is that student going to take up valuable teaching time? [pauses] and I mean aside from the extra time that a special needs student needs and deserves… Is that student going to get the appropriate one-on-one time that they need? And are all students going to benefit from the situation? I believe that inclusion should be an option for each child and should be dependant on the child's needs and abilities.

Other teachers demonstrated attitudes that were consistent with previous research on teacher attitudes in that they were more positive toward certain types of students:

> Students like her are fine, they don't disturb the class too much. It's when you get students with bad behaviours and stuff like that where you think, "Okay, is this really the best place for a student that doesn't let other kids to get anything done?" We can't make these sweeping generalizations about inclusion and just think that everything's going to be great with all the kids lumped into one class. The ones talking about inclusion as if it's going to solve all of society's problems aren't the ones dealing with the day-to-day reality of thirty kids in

> the classroom and all the challenges that come along with them. They're not the ones that have to go out looking for help for every student with difficulties either. Sometimes you don't even get to all the kids in your class, so some with less annoying needs get ignored. It's not that we don't want to do the job well— it's that it's nearly impossible to do it. We need to get real here— inclusion is just a bunch of nice talk with not much to back it up, especially when it comes to those really tough cases. Let's not forget that special needs aren't our only concern as teachers. We have to cover curriculum, we have PATs to worry about, now we have to fit in DPA (daily physical activity), there's the paperwork on top of your teaching, the marking, it all never ends. Sometimes I think we're asked to do an impossible task and to just pretend that it all gets done—well, it doesn't.

Another teacher spoke of recommending a segregated class for a student with difficult behaviours:

> This year wasn't so bad. Sometimes, when they aren't severe, it's not so hard to deal with here. Last year, I had a student with real behaviour problems. He really acted out and disrupted the class, you know? Well, I recommended to the parents that he be put in a behaviour program where they could really help him. It was just too hard for me to deal with. Plus, I had all these other kids struggling and all my time was taken up with this one kid because of his behaviours.

One teacher expressed the belief that despite the possibilities for inclusion to benefit students, some students are not ready for inclusion:

> Some of the inclusion stuff, sometimes the kids aren't ready for it—and I'm talking the whole population. What have we done with our kids? What do we do in schools? I think we're doing a reasonably good job, but you know what? It doesn't matter what you call the class; these kids still get stigmatized. And that's really unfortunate, because more kids could benefit.

Another experienced teacher teaching in a segregated setting expressed the opinion that perhaps her students would learn more in a regular classroom:

> So I'm reluctant to say—do you know what I mean?—that all the time this is the case, and I think they benefit a lot more from being a part of a regular class and having that and us looking at modifying those expectations. I think they learn a lot more than we ever actually fully understand. It comes out in different ways. It may not come out on the test at the end of the unit, but you sit down and talk to them about what we've looked at or what they've done and they're pulling a lot of those facts. And even if they don't get it, by the time you go through elementary school, you've usually [laughs] hit each topic two or three times, and it really does seem to build. So I've been very impressed just having a conversation around different things and the information that will come out. And I'll know that they didn't do very well in a test, so that brings up questions as to perhaps how we could have modified that test a little bit better to suit their learning style. It's kind of a learning curve too.

Some teachers had mixed feelings about inclusion and were concerned about the effect of including students with special education needs on other students in the classroom:

> At the same time though I think that it is different in a classroom setting and that each case has to be carefully considered. It is important to consider both the special needs student as well as the regular stream student. While inclusion can be useful for teaching virtues it is also important that the inclusion of special needs doesn't interfere or restrain the class to the point that students become resentful, or bitter towards the special needs student. I would be very willing to teach a class with a mixture/variety of students as long as I had the funding, the support, and the resources necessary to ensure the best education for all the students in the classroom. You know, I believe that if the special needs student comes to a point where their inclusion in the regular classroom is hindering their own learning, or that of the other students, causing stress or harm to themselves or those around them or becomes too much extra work for the teacher to handle—then it's time to think about placing them in a different system.

A younger teacher was very uncertain about inclusion:

> If inclusion does take place, to what extent should it? Should there be 100% inclusion for all students all the time, or should there be inclusion for some of the students some of the time? We need to look at the children, and what is best for *all* of them. I'm not exactly sure where I stand on this. I think that inclusion is great, but is it affecting the learning of the other students?

Social Inclusion and Social Skills

Many of the teachers in the study appeared to be as concerned, or more concerned, about social inclusion of their students with cognitive disabilities than with their academic inclusion. Issues surrounding friends, fitting in and social skills seemed to be at the forefront of many teachers' minds. They often appeared worried about their students' emotional reactions to not being socially included.

> So for him, I think that is the biggest challenge, is his social awareness is very, very strong, so he has good perception of what's going on around him, and so he really always wants to really, truly try to fit in. And as you know, in a junior high the kids are wonderful here, but he still doesn't totally fit in with them, right? I mean, they high-five him and they sit and talk to him and they visit with him, but as far as on the weekends or things like that, that's not a reality, and I think that's frustrating for him sometimes too.

A grade 1 teacher was concerned about her student's level of social functioning:

> Social things, he has struggled more with—because he was—I don't mean to say he was at the kindergarten level, but he was functioning at that point academically, and in some respects in that way socially as well, so relating to his peers in Grade 1 was more difficult because he was interested in different things than they might have been interested in. And he did have some difficulties with getting into social situations and maintaining that, so we helped him as far as buddying him up to go outside. Sometimes he liked to just be and play by himself, and Susan (his teaching assistant) was okay with that. Sometimes he liked to just do his own thing. But generally in the classroom,

when we would all do math work, he would do math work that was modified for his ability. So we may have been doing adding; he was counting numbers up to five or ten. Or colouring a certain amount. If it said, "Colour five," he was colouring five words; the rest of us were adding numbers to make five or whatever it was. So yes [he struggled socially].

Clare and Tyson's teacher spoke of social challenges for both of her students:

T: I think a lot with friends, I think, sometimes, because a friend, even in Grade 1 their peers or classmates can start to pick up on they're not reading the same level, or just the whole friendship thing, I think, was hard for Clare. She had a hard time—she had friends, but not real close friends. And Tyson was, well, he was quite a bit younger, and he had some social issues too, that he did some things in class that were inappropriate that the kids I don't think really saw. Maybe they did and they chose to ignore it, but I think—

Sort of just, it's hard to—you include the other students and you try to say that we're all different in some ways, but the kids still—you try for them to accept, and they do accept [pause], yet they still know that that child is different in some ways. They still knew that when—I mean, the children beside him could glance over and see that…that's kindergarten work or whatever. They knew that "Tyson does different work than we do."

Clare maybe at times didn't come across as confident as talking with a group of girl peers or maybe needed sort of that extra support to deal with problems, for example. For example, there was one incident where, I think, one

> of the girls said, "Tights in the winter?" or something like that, because she was wearing tights.
>
> I: And she took a lot of that to heart?
>
> T: Yes, she took it really—so here we're trying to build her up and "You can do it, you can do it," and somebody says that. The little girl didn't mean to—I mean, it's just kids being kids, but it was like, Okay, now we've got to do a whole bunch of buildup to get her back up to feeling like she's confident, she's like the other kids, probably because she does sense in some ways that… she needed sort of that extra support.
>
> I: So it seemed to bother her that she needed extra help?
>
> T: She was more aware than Tyson was. Tyson really, it didn't bother him that other kids thought he was whatever… it really didn't bother Tyson as much, whereas Clare, it was very important to her that the other kids were accepting her, that she was the same as the others, and she wasn't falling behind or she wasn't struggling the way that he was.

Bradley's teacher mentioned that she and her teaching assistant were focusing on helping him improve his social skills:

> Bradley…has a lot of problems—how do you put it nicely?—behaving properly in social situations. So he'll see Mr. Osborne in the hallway, and even if Mr. Osborne is talking to the principal, even if he's talking with another parent, Bradley will run up and say "Hello, Mr. Osborne" and interrupt them. So things like that. Or reading a story and the kids will laugh, and he'll laugh along, but he'll scream and laugh. So just little things like that where he just

> gets too excited and can't control and doesn't quite know where to draw the line on social situations, when you can run up and say hi and when you can disrupt and when you can't and all that kind of stuff. So we're working on that with him, you know, constantly; that's just been a constant thing and getting much better, but we're working on it [laughs], yes.

The same teacher talked about the differences between Bradley and Andrea, students with a similar disability:

> Andrea's very good. She's very friendly; she's very polite; she's never mean to anybody; she's a very good little girl. So she has a couple friends from, like I said, both classes, and one of the other little girls here that was here before has taken a liking to her as well. So she's got quite a few friends, so she's not a problem at all. And Bradley has friends, has people that like him, but I think some of the kids maybe find it—he can get very silly, and so he either gets the other kids in trouble because he's being silly, and so they're silly with him, and then they both get in trouble; or I think that some of the kids—I think he has a hard time verbalizing things to other children, so I think that sometimes they may not play with him as much just because of that. But he has a few friends that he'll go out there and play with, and it doesn't seem to be that big of a problem for either of them, but for Bradley more than Andrea. Yes, he just has a little bit of problems with the screaming and all those little things that he likes to do that other kids—other kids are like, "What are you doing?" [laughs]

Factors that Impact Inclusion

Throughout the teacher interviews, inclusion and inclusive practices were questioned and discussed. Teachers identified numerous factors that impacted the success of inclusion for their students. These may be summarized as school environment, strategies used in and out of the classroom, relationship building, and students' personal characteristics.

School Environment

A number of teachers who were interviewed mentioned the school environment and its impact on inclusion. Teachers from one particular school where there was a variety of programs available to students mentioned the diversity of the school and that the school was not homogeneous:

> And our school, we have lots of different levels of educated people here, and so having somebody with some type of disability in the class, it's not an issue here. It's just different, but it wasn't an issue.

Kate's teacher noted how the variety of programs in the school made everyone in the school "different":

> It's neat to see a functioning program like this within a regular school setting. I think it's cool. It's not even a regular school; we've got so many programs in here. If you're in a regular class, "Ooooh, you're weird. What's wrong with you? You're not French Immersion? You're not Academic Challenge? You're not Opportunity? You're not IOP? What's wrong with you? Are you—?" "What's wrong with you? You have no letters attached to you?" [laughs] You know what I mean? —because these kids don't think they're any different

then. Everybody's different in school, seriously, everybody. My dentist always calls it a micro—what does he call it?—just a mini version of the world in one school because everybody has to live together. Everyone has different needs. We all have to kind of understand each other. And we've got late French immersion; we've got French immersion kids that have been doing this for nine years. We've got kids who are reading at Grade 1 level; we've got kids that can't read, can't even talk. They're just mumbling around the school. And everyone's kind of like, "Yeah, okay. That works." [laughs] They don't question it. You don't see—there's still comments from ignorant students generalizing and making comments about students with lower abilities, but usually, when you look at the kid who's saying it, they're kids who probably belong in some sort of special-ed program, and they're scared to admit it. You know what I mean? It's not normally the high-functioning kind of average kid that makes the comment; it's somebody who has low self-esteem and is hurting inside, and so they take it out on everyone else. But otherwise the attitude is very accepting and very welcoming to kind of whoever walks in. Sure, that works. We had a girl for three years in a wheelchair, and everyone knew, just walked to the side. She's coming through, and it wasn't anything unusual, which is neat, because when I was in school, I don't remember seeing anyone with any physical-looking differences from me. Didn't see anyone in a wheelchair; didn't see anyone who was blind, deaf, mute—nothing.

Creating Successful Inclusion

The teachers in the study were asked to comment on the strategies they used to include their students with mild-moderate cognitive disabilities. They described a wide range of strategies, ranging from academic to social, to technological. Some of the teachers used as many strategies as they could find to include their students:

> In this class we're fortunate because it is a smaller group, and we have two assistants in the morning, and I've been really fortunate to have a wonderful student teacher. And so what we've been doing is, we've tried a lot of manipulatives; we have a lot of games; we have a lot of verbal work; we have a lot of group work, a lot of one-on-one; we're able to use the computer room; we've done several things with field trips; there's a lot of personal attention. I try any technique possible that is not normally found in a large classroom. So we're appealing to every type of ability in learning, whether it's auditory learning, kinesthetic learning, and also any type of sensory way of helping children remember.

Others did what they could to include the student with a disability by holding them to similar expectations:

> He was given the same assignments as everybody else. That wasn't an option. He had to complete everything just the same as everybody else. So he was a student like everybody else; he had to complete his assignments. He did a written report in Grade 10, and he had homework. I think he had a spare each year in school, so he worked on art assignments in his spare with [TA] if he didn't get them completed in class. And just mixing and sitting with other

> students, I think that made him feel a very important part with the other kids. He was never, ever segregated; he was just in there.

Although they did not always mention it by name, several of the teachers were using differentiated instruction in the classroom:

> Any time we do a project, a group project or an assignment that he can do with the class, he would participate in it. Any time we do any type of group work or any type of interaction where he would be able to [pause] any kind of role playing, he can participate in as much as he can in class. And when he was in the class last year, he would be in the room pretty much as much as possible with the rest of the kids. So even just being in the room, working. Whether he's not working on exactly the same thing all the time as everybody else, at least he's in the classroom with them, so that makes a huge difference too. I use science because it's easy to use, for example. [In] science they would do rocks and minerals, and they would do projects or assignments on rocks and minerals. And he may not understand all the concepts from the textbook on rocks and minerals, but he could still look at the rocks and determine whether they were hard or soft and whether they were flaky or nothing came off of it. He could determine all those things just by looking at it and make observations, so just like the rest of the class would.

Another teacher described differentiated instruction as an innate style of teaching for meeting student needs:

> And then basically just in my regular grade placements, you just do it naturally to level it to the children that are in your classroom. So I didn't really see it in a

formalized manner, but, of course, you're adapting to the level that they can perform… And I try to group them, but, of course, you still need a cluster or a small group, and they're such a small group anyway, so we end up having two groups, and that way you can maintain the momentum and everybody has a part. We do a literature circle, so they take a lot of ownership in it, and they love it. And they do very well; I'm very pleased with what they do.

One of the key strategies for inclusion was the use of teaching assistants (TAs). Even though schools do not necessarily receive funds for TAs for students with mild-moderate needs as they would for students coded with severe disabilities, many of the students who were the focus of this study had full-time TAs and nearly every class had at least one TA. One class had two TAs most years:

We have two teaching assistants in this classroom. Usually it works out to about that, but it depends every year on the use of sort of the demographics of the classroom and who has severe needs and needs assistance and support. Gabriella and Mona are my teaching assistants this year.

A number of teachers believed that their students required a full-time TA regardless of their status as students with mild-moderate disabilities. Caleb, for example, had a full-time TA called Janet:

I: And is Janet with him full time?

T: Yes, yes.

I: Is there any part of the day that he's on his own or—?

T: Lunchtime usually he's by himself. Janet has him and another student, and the other student has Down syndrome, so she's split between the two of them.

> So there are times throughout the day that he is by himself. And the other student doesn't necessarily go to all—the other student gets pulled out for language arts and math a little bit more, whereas Caleb stays in the room, so he would stay in the room with the teacher, and Janet would go work with the other student.

Another teacher relied heavily on the TA in her classroom to provide one-on-one time for Kate:

> There's little one-on-one time as in removed from the class, but when it comes to sit-down academic work, I'd say most of that time is one-on-one. There's very little time that Mrs. Bowen goes wandering around. That's when I take over the rest and focus on them. But the majority of the time Kate does have that. But right now I think we'll go a little bit less, just increase independence—not to ignore her, but just to increase independence for her. Right now there's such growth with expectations being laid out, keeping her focused, distracting her from colouring, from—she really likes going through my shelves and going to find books to read and look through, so we're trying to break her of doing that in the middle of an assignment. So there's that sort of thing. And she needs constant attention, one-on-one.

Tara's teacher relied on her TA to provide considerable one-on-one time with the student in her Kindergarten class:

> T: I would say one-on-one has been great, and by having the aide, that

> has been a great help.... So by her having her aide, even though she was part of the group, she always was sort of making sure Tara was on task doing something.

The teachers who had TAs were clearly appreciative of the additional help with their more challenging students:

> She does get aide time during Phys. Ed. and options. She gets pretty well three-on-one aide time, so it's not one-on-one, but it's three-on-one, which is pretty darned good.

At times, TAs supervised learning and social activities outside of the classroom. One of the high school teachers described a program called a *learning lab*, where students could go to catch up on work or get some extra assistance:

> We've set up what we call a learning lab where we staff that lab with two TAs at this minute. The kids, from 7 to 12, they go there to write exams that they've missed; they go there to get exams read to them; they go there if they're struggling with material in a class. For example, I'm a social studies teacher; I just went through some explanations on Russia, Brazil, whatever. Now the kids have an assignment. Here's a kid says, "I don't have a clue what you're talking about." Some of those kids, to get one-on-one, are now going to the learning lab, where they then work with a TA one-on-one to do that, and there's not a stigma attached to it. The kids are feeling comfortable. I have some kids in Grade 11: "Can I go work in the learning lab?" Even if the classroom is noisy and they can't focus and they know they need to, "Can I go work in the

> learning lab?" You've got to watch that it's not an excuse just to get out, and they never reach the learning lab. You've got to have all the stuff in place. But it's been quite successful in junior-senior high area. So that's the way I think a number of schools are going.

Other teachers spoke of TAs as being *the* source of extra assistance that increases the success of inclusion:

> I'm all for integration, as long as there's teacher support, because there have been a few times where we've had children that don't qualify for an aide [due to their status as having a mild-moderate disability rather than a severe disability] that really need one. So there you're catering to the needs of one over the needs of twenty, and that's where it becomes very difficult. So I just feel if you're in a situation where you have a child that has some special needs, you need that extra support just to make it easier on everybody. For me, the best way to do that is to have an aide.

Another teacher agreed that inclusion could not occur without the TA in the classroom:

> He can't have inclusion without assistance. And other than the colouring, like I said, if somebody outlines—so we just did a little picture of a poppy, and everybody coloured the same picture. [The TA] outlined it in red, the parts that needed to be red, the part that needed to be green, and he was fine. But as far as—and he can read, so that's another independent activity he can do on his own. But then it doesn't keep his attention for long, and he's looking for attention.

A teacher of a segregated program spoke of the importance of the TAs in her class:

> I couldn't have coped without them. I would concentrate on academics, while they concentrated on behaviours. It worked really well and I don't think I could have accomplished a lot without them there—it would have been nearly impossible.

Relationships, Encouragement and Rapport-Building

Several teachers interviewed made mention of the importance of building a relationship with their students with special education needs through encouragement or building rapport with the students as a way of practicing inclusion. Many of the teachers described encouragement as a key strategy for inclusion. For example, Jana's teacher encouraged Jana to keep her working in class:

> Strategies are just encouragement. She needs a lot of encouragement just to keep going. It depends on the situation. For instance, if we're doing something where it's easier for her to see, like a highlighted instruction or for highlighting parts of speech or—if she continues to make a mistake, sometimes we'll underline it or circle it if we're editing. I try not to intervene unless she needs it to be successful so that when she goes back to the regular classroom, she has those strategies.

Kate's teacher spoke of encouragement as a strategy often used with her student:

> Again, it's just, she needs motivation; she needs encouragement: "Kate, let's read this. Okay, that doesn't make sense." So she's just like every other junior high kid. You know, get done as soon as they can and enough already. But she was doing a lot of maybe less mature things.

Darren's teacher spoke of building rapport with the student:

> I would think the personal connection is what I find just works with him. For the most part, I think, to get him onside and to get him working is a personal connection. If you can establish a personal connection with him—he knows that you have, I guess, a knowledge of some of the other things he's doing, not just in the classroom setting, but all the other things—then I think you're able to pull him along in terms of doing some things that he might normally not want to do or not attempt to do.

Personal Characteristics: A Personality for Inclusion

Many of the teachers interviewed attributed the success of inclusion in the classroom to personal characteristics of the students. This relates to the way in which the students' disabilities manifest within each individual student, but teachers often referred to these personal characteristics as being important to the student's success in an inclusive environment. Colin and Evan's teacher referred to her students in the following way:

> They're kind; they're loving; they're warm; they're very sensitive; they're very low key, so that even though they are very good in many things, they don't brag; they do not overpower other students who are at a situation where they're not as good in those things. And so they are respected for their kindness. .. I never see a jealousy. In fact, in this class we encourage—everybody cheers for everybody else, and every time, I think, one of them has received a certificate and the other hasn't, they've cheered for each other.

Darren's teacher spoke of his pleasant personality:

> ...he tried out for basketball. He loves basketball. For a high school team, he just doesn't have the agility, but he did go out, and he did do the first sort of round, and he was in one of the cuts—I mean, the cuts—but he didn't back off from it and say, "Well, no, I can't do this; I'm not going to even try" or "I'll just get cut anyway" or that kind of thing. His personality takes him a long ways in terms of where he goes... For the most part, unless he has a—he has the odd bad day, but he's a very positive young fellow. He's very well mannered, so people respond generally not negatively to him—although, like I say, he does have some times when he'll throw a ball at somebody or somebody will throw a ball back at him and hit him or whatever.

For Jana's teacher, Jana's motivation was an important factor in helping her work independently:

> But she's actually a very motivated young lady, so a lot of times I just need to check for understanding that she's clear, because she becomes very frustrated if she doesn't understand the task. I think it's fairly obvious for anyone. But basically you can tell when it's a good match for her because she can—do you know what I mean?—she'll dive in to do it independently, or you can get her thinking that way and then start her, and she can maintain that.

Jana's teacher also appreciated her student's kindness and willingness to follow rules:

> [She's] generally very kind [laughs], very kind and loving, I would say. She has a very soft heart. [laughs] So cute to see. But she also likes to be out playing soccer and be rough and tumble, and to see her in there—which I think

> is good too though, because she's very active during the recess breaks, and I think that helps us very much. As soon as she comes in, she's ready to concentrate. But no, she's pretty sharing; she's ready to share quite often. She gets impatient sometimes, but I think that's really not a big issue. But pretty much she remembers to use her hand, follow the rules, those kinds of things. When things happen just through sharing or through doing something—we do snacks and stuff in here, and she's often very willing to wait her turn. She doesn't complain. The only time she ever gets upset is if somebody takes something of hers or spills something on it—you know what I mean?—which we talk about that, and she should be able to have her stuff be safe in here and have that expectation, so we just work on how to handle that if it happens and stuff like that.

Framed Analysis

In the following section, the results of the analysis performed are presented specifically within a Foucauldian framework. These data will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Special Education as the Dominant Discourse

Upon analysis, the teachers' most common and dominant discourse was easily identifiable. The examples that follow are key exemplars of teacher comments that support or uphold this common discourse and associated discourses. The most predominant emergent theme was the discourse of special education. Although many of the teachers interviewed struggled with inclusion, their ideas of special education were clear and easily expressed.

It was clear throughout the teacher interviews that although all the teachers were aware of the focus of the research project being on inclusion, special education was the dominant focus for them. As demonstrated in the previous section, many teachers were concerned with inclusion as a practice and most of the teachers had mixed feelings about inclusion. Further analysis of the teacher transcripts allowed for the existing discourse of special education to come to the fore. For example, all of the teachers were able to easily identify their current and past students according to their disabilities. Without exception, each of the teachers readily listed off the types of disabilities they had seen in their classrooms or over the span of their careers. Even when they were not aware of a specific disability, or in cases where the student did not carry a precise diagnosis, the teachers often identified the student's problems with a more general disability, such as "learning disability" or "developmental disability":

> We have one child with Tourette's, and then there's a couple children that we don't know about. Bradley himself was adopted from Romania, so we're not too sure there. And we have some other children that have been diagnosed with Tourette's, but we're not too sure if that's the case... They're kind of wishy-washy. And then Andrea has a mild case of cerebral palsy or whatever. And the rest of them just have very low IQs, so not necessarily any specific disability, but just a— kind of learning, yes, disability.

Another teacher grouped the disabilities she had come across in her general classroom:

> Let me see… I've had kids with LD, severe behaviour, autism, dysgraphia, Down syndrome, all sorts, but not too many severes. Then there were a couple

> where there wasn't a real diagnosis, so it was like a developmental disability or pervasive developmental disorder or whatever.

One of the teachers of a segregated class described the types of disabilities she had seen thus far in her career:

> There would be the physical disabilities, children who are born with certain illnesses; there are children with genetic problems; there are children who have autism, various levels of autism; we've had a schizophrenic; we have had behaviorally defiant children; we've had children with other psychiatric—OCD conditions, a manic depressive child; pretty well the gamut of what you would find through many different programs.

In addition to listing disabilities, many of the teachers referred to codes assigned to the students according to Alberta's Coding Criteria:

> I would say most recently, in the last three years, being that, because of our program, there's been Down syndrome; there's been Asperger's, autism; we've had cerebral palsy, spina bifida; lots of kids coded 51 or 54, so mild to moderate learning disabilities—not necessarily physical disabilities, but lots of learning disabilities. I have had kids with shunts, kids with heart defects, a really wide range.

Another teacher was so familiar with the codes that she used them in conversation as naturally as she used words:

> In my class, I've had lots of code 54s [Learning Disability], plus a couple of 80s [Gifted and Talented] and of course 51s [Mild-Moderate Cognitive Disability]. Probably the most difficult have been the code 42s [Severe

> Emotional/Behavioural Disability], like ODD. Most of the other 40s [Severe] are not as bad as some of the 50s [Mild-Moderate].

Otherness

It was clear throughout the interviews that students with special education needs are very much regarded as Others, whether they are placed in a regular classroom or segregated setting. None of the teachers interviewed, including those who taught segregated classes, spoke of her students with special education needs as being just another student in the class. Even when the comments were positive, the teachers referred to the differences between students far more frequently than the similarities:

> I can see how he's made gains since he's been here. It's not the same as the other kids, but we have to celebrate gains he makes, however small.

One teacher was grateful to have had a student with a cognitive disability in her class, and she saw it as a learning experience:

> I think this is a great thing that you're doing, because if more kids with problems can end up with a productive life, that's great. It's great for society; it's great for the individual, the family; and it's been a real learning experience for me having somebody with a problem like this in the class. I probably learned more than he did. [laughs]

Many teachers spoke of their students' interactions with other students in the class:

> He's great with the quote, unquote, normal kids, so the buddies, the kids that are—in the class they're doing the high-fives with him, and if you do group work in the class and you put him with a group of kids, he's sometimes a little

> bit anxious at first because he's not really sure of the situation; but once he gets comfortable and he gets familiar with the kids and is with them continually, he works really well with it.

A Kindergarten teacher referred to the level of functioning of her student with cognitive disabilities in reference to the other students in the class:

> Well, he's not at the age level of the rest of the children, at the age level and cognitively he's not at the intellectual level, so he's not doing exactly—not completing the kindergarten work as such … and to the extent that the other children are doing. And he's getting a part of what we're doing, a modified version, very, very, very modified, and sometimes not at all, depending on what we're doing. So you have to be realistic: He's probably at a ten-month age level. These kids are five and six years old. And so it's more of the importance, I think, in his world right now, is socially to be—the social aspect of his growth is very important right now as well. So that's huge in that you get a lot of feedback from being in this group of twenty…

Some teachers imparted to their other students that their student(s) with special education needs are different and that they require positive influences in the classroom:

> … they love him, and they know he's different because I always say that Joey learns differently, and we have to be patient. We also have to teach him. So if we're doing something that we shouldn't, then we're teaching Joey something that he will eventually do, so they have to be teachers to Joey.

Some of the teachers believed that the students with special education needs should themselves recognize that they are different from others:

> I think when you look at somebody who's growing up—and I worked with a Down syndrome who was in Grade 5…and he didn't realize [he was different from the others]. And this is coming from a ten-year-old…

One teacher spoke of the increasing difference between her student with a cognitive disability and the other students, which became more evident with time:

> It's just about a reality. He's interested in more the science fiction or the [games]. As I said, play mode. And [he] loves movies. He will repeat many lines to movies. They'll just come right off the top of his head, and I think that's a good interest that maybe the kids can keep with him, keep up with him there. But I mean, he's in Grade 5; next year is Grade 6. I think that, well, he's really involved in the community too…like when he played with the hockey team. — because he's not focused. He wouldn't follow the puck; there was just too much happening. And yet if you put him in net, you have to be focused as a goalie; you have to be focused. But I mean, his dad was right there on the bench and helping out and the whole works. And what happened there is, he grew apart, right? Because it's fine to start with the young children like that, but then they excelled and he didn't excel…and I see that happening in the school. I mean, it will be inclusion, I assume, for the rest of his schooling…

Normalization and Surveillance

As part of the discourse of special education, many of the teachers readily described the plethora of specialists that assisted with their students or had assessed their students in the past:

> Well, we have our occupational therapist looking at him, and she's got her strategies, all part of the IPP, and then we've got our speech-language pathologist; she works with him also, so once a week. So he's getting a lot of attention. And, of course, whatever they work on, they hand us the sheets, and that's what we would work on for the week, his goals given by the speech therapist. Of course he's been seen by doctors and the psychologist, a lot of specialists have been involved.

A teacher of a segregated program had the help of many specialists:

> Of course they all went to their doctor first, then the psychologist to figure out the level of functioning. Some of my kids have had a social worker involved, there's been play therapy, we had some other math and reading specialists come out, the speech pathologist comes regularly, plus one of the kids needed the occupational therapist. The TAs have to take all this information and try to apply it with the kids—not always an easy task, right?

The teachers in the study identified many ways by which their students were constantly supervised. The most obvious method of surveillance is the use of proximity by teachers and TAs:

> And as far as functioning in the classroom, he's pretty good… But sitting close to me when we're having story corner, that helps; so proximity again, and just

> having someone close by. Sometimes I think he needs a little bit maybe something to do with his hands, so using a slate, and he can make marks on it.

Joey's teacher commented on the surveillance method used during recess:

> And then there is another little boy who has Down syndrome, in our school, in Grade 3. Joey is more advanced than he is, but [he] and Joey play together at recess because they both need to be supervised, so there'll be one TA kind of looking. Now, they don't hold their hand the whole time through the playground; they do interact with other children. It's just that the TA has them in the one area, and she keeps circulating, and so that they are interacting with other kids as well.

Several teachers, particularly those who taught in regular classrooms, noted how they involve other students in the class to supervise their students with special education needs:

> I have him in the computer lab with twenty-nine individuals in there, and he really enjoys the computer and knows a fair amount about it. And at first it was very demanding, but then a peer, whoever was beside him, you'd say, "Well, you just have to look onto Jonathan's computer as soon as I give the task. Just quickly look on Jonathan's to see if he's on the right track." And then now he's realized there's no aide in there, just me and the twenty-nine of them. But I think it's because it's something he's confident in. I think if he did not know the computer, we would be in for a real battle.

Another teacher recruited her other students to help with her student with a cognitive disability:

> And as far as functioning in the classroom, he's pretty good. And the kids help, so I use the kids as helpers, and we try and direct him as much as possible.

Charity Discourse

Some of the teachers' views fell into the category of the *charity discourse*. This was evident when teachers spoke about doing what was best for the students based on a sense of pity or feeling sorry for the students:

> And, unfortunately, we have a couple of students who feel so sad if they think they're not doing…what everybody else is doing, and I will not have them feel left out or sad. So we've tried to make them successful to some degree doing what they think is what the whole group is doing on that theme.

One teacher of a segregated class felt sorry for her students when she felt they were not included in the school:

> I do feel bad for these kids sometimes. I mean, they aren't really part of the whole school, you know what I mean? It just breaks my heart, so I do what I can to try and make them fit in, but I have to accept that they probably never will.

Rights Discourse

The primary discourse of many of the teachers whose comments toward inclusion were positive can be identified as falling into the *rights discourse*, as identified in previous research:

> This is not about teachers. How can I deprive this human being of getting all he needs out of school? How can I ethically do that to a child? They all deserve

> to be treated with respect and have their needs met, so why should he be any different?

An experienced teacher spoke of a student she had taught in the past who had exceeded her expectations of him:

> You never know how kids are going to turn out, so I think you have to give them all the benefit of the doubt. They have a right to the best education we can give them, just like any other student. When I was a young teacher, I taught some kids I thought were lazy and would just never make it. Now, one student that I thought this about is really successful and makes more money in a week than I make in a couple months! That was an awakening for me. You can't judge the kids by how they are now and think that they're destined to be one way or another- life just doesn't work out that way.

A younger teacher relayed her opinion that excluding students is not right or fair to them:

> I just think of how I would feel if that were to be me, in [the students with special education needs'] position. I don't think [that] excluding kids benefits them in many ways. They may begin to act out believing that they are stupid, or different, just because others say so. This isn't what we as educators are here to do. I think it is fair to say, that we want all the children in our classrooms to feel safe and accepted, so how could we do that, by excluding certain students. It's just not right, or fair to the child.

Coping Discourse

Many of the teachers spoke of their classroom strategies as ways of coping with students with special education needs, or wondered how they were supposed to cope with the difficult task of meeting the needs of all their students:

> We do all we can for him, but you know, he'll never be at the level of his peers. So why do we keep going? Because we have to. Inclusion is the way now, so we don't really have a choice. It's a good thing I have a TA because I don't know how I'd cope otherwise.

An experienced teacher wished for the days of segregated classes, when teaching was easier:

> It's a real challenge having all these kids with different needs in my class. Sometimes you just don't know how you'll cope. You wish for the days where there were more special classes for kids with disabilities. But, you know that that's not the reality anymore so you have to go on and do the best you can.

One teacher coped with the difficulties of a heterogeneous class by remembering that no two students are exactly alike:

> I don't like to talk about him like he's different from the others. You know, to me, all the kids are different from each other and you just deal with it. Sure, I sometimes wish they were all at the exact same level, but I know that as an adult I work differently than most other adults I know, even if we have some things in common. I look at the kids the same way. They're all

different and some share more similarities than others. That's my own personal philosophy and it's what helps me cope with the day-to-day stuff.

An experienced teacher would relish the positive advancements with her students with special education needs and would remind herself that the school year will come to an end, regardless of how difficult a year it has been:

> We're all just trying to keep our heads above water. Sometimes we don't know how we'll manage. You're thankful for those years where you have a TA or some other help. And you just live for those days where there's a breakthrough, or a day without a crisis. In the end, you do the best you can and you finish the year—and those ten months do go by quickly—and move on to the next group with all of *their* challenges. Somehow, we just manage to deal with it all and keep sane too—sheesh, and people think teachers have an easy job!

Acceptance Discourse

Several of the teachers interviewed spoke of inclusion as a fact that had to be accepted, even though some appeared reluctant to accept it:

> It's just the way it is these days. Inclusion is the philosophy of the day and we have to do what we can to make it happen.

Another teacher believed that the extra work of inclusion was worth it, and not worth fighting:

> Inclusion means more work for the teachers on a daily basis, but if it benefits the child's learning experience, it's worth it. We have to realize as teachers that this inclusion thing isn't going to go away, so why fight it, right?

Policy Document Analysis

This third and final section of the chapter is composed of the analysis of two key Alberta Education policy documents. First, the *Standards for Special Education* document is presented, followed by the *Special Education Coding Criteria*. An overview of each document is provided, followed by an analysis of the discursive elements that are seen to be present within each. The relationship between the discourse present in these documents and the analyses previously discussed in this chapter will be elaborated upon in the following chapter.

Standards for Special Education: Overview

Alberta's *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004* applies to all publicly funded schools from Grades 1 to 12, excluding charter schools. This document may be seen as the main policy document which guides schools' actions with regard to their students with special education needs. The purpose of the *Standards* is to outline requirements for schools and parents with regards to educating students with special education needs. It requires school boards to deliver effective and appropriate programming for students with special education needs, regardless of their location within the province. Diagnosis is a cornerstone of the *Standards*, given that "special education refers to the education of students with mild, moderate, or severe disabilities and those who are gifted and talented" (p. 1). Despite its initial focus on special education, the *Standards* document states that "in Alberta, educating students with special education needs in inclusive settings is the first placement option to be considered by school boards in consultation with parents and, when appropriate, students" (p. 1). It is then explained that inclusion refers not only to setting, but to

"specially designed instruction and support for students with special education needs in regular classrooms and neighbourhood schools" (p. 1).

The *Standards* document outlines the requirements for school boards under four headings: Access, Appropriateness, Accountability and Appeals. Access refers to providing services to which students with special education needs are entitled. After seeking informed consent, school boards must identify the students with special education needs in their midst through classroom and specialized assessments. School boards must additionally coordinate services with other agencies and community organizations in order to best provide for the student.

The following section, Appropriateness, focuses on professional standards of teaching, ensuring parent involvement in decision-making, placement, and Individual Program Plans (IPPs). The placement portion of the Appropriateness section reiterates that "educating students with special education needs in inclusive settings in neighbourhood or local schools shall be the first placement option considered by school boards" (p.10).

Accountability refers to the reporting required for school boards, as well as the monitoring of students' progress and their participation in provincial assessments with special provisions or exclusion from participating in these assessments. The final section, Appeals, outlines parents' rights to appeal any decision made by the school, which can eventually go to the level of the Minister.

Discourse

The *Standards* document contains a number of opposing discourses. The title itself contains the words special education, but it includes two strong statements

requiring inclusion to be the first placement option. The definition of inclusion appears to carry some flexibility in that it refers "not merely to setting", but also reinforces that inclusion requires "specially designed instruction and support…in regular classrooms and neighbourhood schools" (p. 1). These statements therefore support the concept of inclusion, but they are embedded in a context that is based on notions of special education. There is a focus on surveillance, identification, assessment, specialized assessments, and provincial assessments, in addition to IPPs and frequent monitoring ensure that the student with special education needs is constantly under surveillance.

It is interesting to note that the *Standards* document refers to the responsibilities of school boards, but in reality these responsibilities fall upon the teachers themselves, as it is they who are in constant and direct contact with the students with special education needs, their parents, and professionals and paraprofessionals brought in to assist with the student.

Special Education Coding Criteria: Overview

The *Special Education Coding Criteria* (Coding Criteria) is Alberta Education's guide to assigning numerical codes to students who qualify for special education services. The Coding Criteria provides a list of codes which may be assigned to students who meet the criteria. The codes are divided into mild-moderate (50s), severe (40s) and Gifted and Talented (80). Without exception, each of the codes requires a specialized assessment by a qualified professional. All of the criteria are very specific, with the exception of Learning Disabilities, which is broad and provides more general guidelines to using that code. Additionally, the Coding Criteria document states that specialized assessments must be completed every two to five

years and there must be an annual review of the student's functioning and programming.

Discourse

The Coding Criteria document is in clear support of special education principles and makes no mention of inclusion. As with the *Standards*, the Coding Criteria provides the context for Foucault's notions of normalization, the medical/educational gaze, and surveillance. Additionally, the broad definition of Learning Disabilities acts as a category in which students may be placed when their specific diagnosis is not known and they cannot be easily assigned to one of the categories or codes. As a method of normalization, this allows teachers to "code" a student who may be struggling in school, but who does not carry a specific diagnosis.

More evident in the *Coding Criteria* than in the *Standards* is the reliance on specialists for assessments that set into motion the coding or identification of a student as having special education needs. This reliance on specialists creates the teachers as subjects whose power and knowledge are not at the level of the specialists and therefore may be considered a subjugated knowledge.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The previous chapter provided a description of some of the major themes that emerged from the data analysis. In addition to providing a general discussion of findings, this chapter has two main purposes: first, to present the findings in the historical, political, and discursive contexts of the Foucauldian theoretical framework; and second, to situate the findings with the literature on inclusion. Finally, practical considerations and future directions for policy and practice will be presented.

General Discussion

Inclusion

The findings of the present study demonstrate that there is not a single, unified discourse of inclusion amongst the teachers interviewed. Instead, there are multiple definitions and practices that operate under the sign of "inclusion"—and therefore, different understandings of the term by its practitioners. This points to several disjunctures within the meaning of the term inclusion for the teachers in this study. In addition to varying definitions of inclusion, the teachers had a distinct discourse with regard to the factors contributing to the success of inclusion.

One unifying element that was common amongst the teachers is a sense of *wanting what is best for their students*. Regardless of the discourse on placement, teachers held the belief that their version of "inclusion" was what is best for the student(s). This may be seen to be part of the discourse of teaching, in that to be a good teacher, teachers should act in the best interests of their students. However, in aligning themselves with one of the discourses of what it means to be a good teacher,

the teachers in this study may be seen to be subverting the dominant discourse of inclusion by justifying various idiosyncratic or "unauthorized" uses of the term if they believe that it refers to practices that are best for students. This is to say that the teachers subverted the dominant discourse of inclusion and created their own definition of the term by adopting the position of doing what is best for the student and by making it their own to suit their individual beliefs. In so doing, the teachers are making an attempt at creating an environment that they believe is best for their students, in spite of written policies. However, it may be that the teachers are, in actuality, acting in their own self-interests by promoting exclusionary practices.

However, at times the teachers reverse this discourse in such a way that the meaning of inclusion takes on an exclusionary focus. Teachers whose attitudes could be construed as being negative are creating a discourse of what is best for the *majority* of their students rather than *all* of their students. In this case, teachers have taken a portion of the discourse of inclusion and transformed it to mean what they believe is best for their students. This transformation of the term may be seen as stemming from the discourse of what it is to be a good teacher: *good* teachers do what is best for their students. The teachers have, in this case, demonstrated the type of professionalization that Skrtic (1995) believes creates "individuals who share the belief that they are acting in the best interests of the clients, based on knowledge which they assume to be objective" (Allan, 1999). Specifically in the Alberta context, teachers are subject to the *Teaching Quality Standard Applicable to the Provision of Basic Education in Canada* (Alberta Learning, 1997). Hence, the teachers in this study have developed a new discourse which falls under the term "inclusion," but which is situated within the

discourse of professional conduct and competes with the discourse of inclusion as it is used in the research literature. The teachers are faced with what they perceive to be a double-bind and they find a way out of this bind by altering one of two contradictory imperatives—namely, include all students—to preserve their practice of the other.

If teachers' discourse of inclusion is discordant with the dominant meaning of the term, then it is not surprising that the vision of inclusion as presented in the research literature has not been realized. Given that teachers are at the centre of the implementation of any initiative at the classroom level, then it is impossible for inclusion as it is defined in the literature to be implemented if teachers have created for themselves new and varying meanings of the term.

Special Education and Otherness

With respect to teacher attitudes, the interviews showed that there were few attitudes that could be construed as either very positive or very negative. Rather, most teachers agreed with some aspects of inclusion and had reservations about other aspects. This appears to be consistent with previous studies on teacher attitudes; in studies undertaken in the positivist paradigm, these mixed attitudes would have likely been seen as generally positive toward inclusion in theory and more negative in practice. However, teachers' responses to questions about inclusion and strategies for including students with special education needs reveal a great deal more than these previous studies were able to reveal. The teachers' views of inclusion can be seen as being deeply rooted in the discourse of special education. Skrtic (1995, p. 75) notes that special education practices are premised on the following four assumptions:

1. Student disability is a pathological condition.
2. Differential diagnosis is objective and useful.
3. Special education is a rationally conceived and coordinated system of services that benefits diagnosed students.
4. Progress in special education is a rational-technical process of incremental improvements in conventional diagnostic and instructional practices.

It is clear from the interview data that these assumptions were still very much prevalent in the minds of the teachers who participated in this study. The issue for those who wish for the project of inclusion to move forward is that the discourses of special education and inclusion are not compatible in the sense that while inclusion seeks to move beyond differences, practices and beliefs of special education seek to reinforce those differences. For example, many of the teachers in the study focused on coding and diagnoses; they were entirely focused on differences, and therefore, exclusion. Given the current focus on coding and diagnosis supported by the *Standards* and the *Coding Criteria*, the teacher must necessarily be preoccupied with obtaining specialist help or other assistance to meet the specific needs of "the code" or "the diagnosis". This removes the focus from the individual student and her or his specific needs. In the absence of such coding and diagnosis-based "treatment" of disability, teachers would be free to spend a great deal more time addressing and meeting individual needs in the classroom.

Foucault's concept of Otherness was another dominant theme found in the teacher interviews, and this can also be related to the discourse of special education. As a result of the psychological and medical discourses that are fundamental to the

discourse of special education, students with special education needs are seen as Others. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, teachers in this study focused on listing disabilities and codes. Several believed in the value of segregated settings and that these classes have a role in an inclusive school. These ideas are all firmly based in the discourse of special education, and have been since the inception of specialized schools in the early part of the twentieth century. As demonstrated in the historical overview in Chapter 2, the foundation for the discourse of special education was not inclusive; on the contrary, it was rather exclusive.

This is not to say that the teachers interviewed did not care for their students, or did not endeavour to meet their students' needs to the best of their abilities. In fact, much of what teachers said in the interviews leads to the opposite conclusion. However, the policies in place to support inclusion in the province work to reinforce notions of difference and Otherness instead, so the teachers are merely responding in an appropriate manner given the flawed system in which they must work. Furthermore, the climate of accountability provides an additional gaze whereby the teachers may face consequences by subverting the required administrative tasks that are asked of them to maintain the system of coding and focusing on differences. Furthermore, this continued focus on Otherness confirms Graham and Slee's (2008) assertion that "to include is not to *be* inclusive" (original emphasis). For even though most of the teachers believed that their classrooms and schools were inclusive, it is difficult to be truly inclusive when a focus is put on the differences of those with special education needs.

Another factor enabling Otherness that appears in the teacher interviews is the strong support for teaching assistants (TAs). The teachers undoubtedly appreciated the help afforded to them when there was one or more TAs assigned to the classroom or to a particular student. However, we know from the literature that the use of TAs is not the most effective strategy for helping to advance the educational goals of students with special education needs in that TAs can promote further segregation of the student from others in the class or the school (Giangreco, Edelman, Luiselli & MacFarland, 1997).

Supporting Otherness Through Research?

According to Allan (2008) and Slee and Allan (2001), research in the field of education may be complicit in upholding notions of special education and Otherness, even while attempting to undo them. Like the teachers, researchers maintain the structures of special education, and therefore Otherness, by using the same categories or labels and by placing a focus on students with special education needs. If we are to be inclusive, then research, in addition to teaching practices and school norms, must reflect a discourse of inclusion, rather than repeating notions of special education.

The current study has not transcended this issue, in that a focus was placed on students with a particular code. However, I have attempted to minimize the focus on the coding/ diagnosis by not making it a focus in the analysis of the interviews, and I have not analyzed questions specific to the types of disabilities, with the exception of those that illustrated the concepts of special education and Otherness as described above. Furthermore, in this study, I have attempted to deconstruct some of the basic, accepted assumptions that have formed teachers' attitudes, namely that the continued

links with special education and coding are not conducive to changing attitudes or practices since they are grounded in the same basic principles (i.e. that those with disabilities are an Other, and that they can be helped with appropriate interventions) that have existed for generations.

Surveillance and Normalization

The guiding special education (rather than inclusion) policies for Alberta—namely the *Standards for Special Education* and *Special Education Coding Criteria*—in addition to upholding special education principles, work to ensure that students with special education needs are normalized and are under constant surveillance. By requiring a wide range of specialists and administrative work such as IPPs and countless other forms, teachers are encouraged to focus on student differences and on what Skrtic (1995) calls "fixing" the student of her or his special education need(s).

The *Standards* and *Coding Criteria* also serve to reinforce normalization in the same way. That the teachers paid particular attention to personal characteristics of students as factors that improve the success of inclusion demonstrates their entrenchment in processes of normalization. What the teachers did not mention is that within any classroom, there is a range of students with a range of abilities and there are always some who are easier to teach or more likeable. This is the case in every classroom, regardless of its designation. Why, then, did the teachers feel compelled to talk about personal characteristics and social skills as either improving or impairing the successful inclusion of that student? While I cannot speak to the teachers' individual motivation for speaking to these categories, it is likely because they are trained to look for differences in those who carry with them a diagnosis. The teachers

often compared their students with special education needs with other students in their class, but we can safely assume that there are as many differences amongst the "normal" students as there are between the "normal" students and the students with special education needs. This concept could be made visible employing the oft-used (and abused) concept of the bell curve. By placing the students of any given class on a bell curve based on learning ability, the students within the wide range of "normal intelligence" vary as much or more in their actual abilities than students considered to have special education needs. As stated by Simons and Masschelein (2005), "the problems that disabled people [sic] confront are not different in nature; but in degree" (p. 217). As noted by Stainback and Stainback (1984), "there are not—as implied by a dual system—two distinctly different types of students, that is, those who are special and those who are regular"; there are instead individuals on a continuum, some of whom are considered different as a result of the psychological and/or medical discourses that underpin special education. As Brantlinger (2006) notes while discussing the "flawed logic of average expectations," it is entirely "normal for children to achieve at various levels, hence children who place anywhere on an achievement continuum are normal".

Moreover, through the mechanisms of power that are realized through coding and categorization practices, the teachers themselves are closely monitored by various accountability processes, such as Special Education Programming Standards Reviews or the recent Severe Disabilities Realignment Review. These reviews, though different in scope and purpose, work to further reinforce notions of special education and Otherness while being a method of scrutinizing teachers. Thus, while the teachers are

subjecting their students with special education needs to the gaze of normalization, they in turn are subject to the gaze of administrative requirements and reviews by government.

Teachers' Subjugated Knowledge

Although past research has called on researchers to investigate subjugated knowledge on the part of students with special education needs (Allan, 1999), in this study I have chosen to use teacher interviews as representative of subjugated knowledge. While on the surface teachers are the holders of power/knowledge in the classroom, they also hold disqualified knowledge. Policies require experts (psychologists, physicians and the like) to provide specialized knowledge and suggestions to inform classroom practices; this suggests that teachers' knowledge is not considered to be sufficient for implementing those policies, let alone developing them. Moreover, the *Standards* document addresses "school boards," whereas the bulk of the responsibilities that they outline fall to the teacher. By addressing school boards, the *Standards* document reinforces that the teachers' knowledge is subjugated. Perhaps the future inclusion of teachers' voices in policy development would result in greater acceptance of the policy, and its implementation would be more successful.

A Return to the Literature

Building on Past Research

The present study has built upon the past research on teacher attitudes toward inclusion by listening to the voices of the teachers and by deconstructing the underpinnings of their beliefs. Although the general attitudes of the teachers may be said to resemble past research findings, this study has analyzed those attitudes in light

of "rules of discourse" that have been formed by the major policy documents. This analysis has provided a new way of looking at teachers' attitudes toward inclusion; more specifically, it has involved an unravelling of the idea that the policy structures are the main force that form teachers' attitudes. The sections that follow serve to discuss further links between the research literature and the present study.

The Discourse of Inability and a Reliance on Experts

A common theme in the teacher interviews and in the research literature (e.g. Anderson, Klassen & Georgiou, 2007; Wolpert, 2001) is that teachers feel either that they are not qualified to implement inclusion, or that they require additional support to do so—hence their reliance on TAs. In keeping with the above discussion of teachers as holders of subjugated knowledge, this discourse of inability, of constantly requiring additional assistance or deferring to those with more expertise in the area, may be considered "an ideology expertism" which "legitimizes the structures of domination" (Slee, 2000, p. 196). Slee contends that the use of expert knowledge is based upon the ever-present medical discourse that was adopted in the field of special education, and which forms its epistemological foundations. It is possible, then, to assume that many teachers, who do in fact possess the necessary knowledge and skills required to include students with special education needs in their classrooms, feel inadequate as a result of the dominant medical discourse and, more specifically, as a result of the idea that experts are required to assist with students who are outside of the norm. The administrative burden placed on teachers and the exclusionary practices that are mandated by policy documents certainly render the deference to experts easier for teachers than managing their workloads without this "help." However, turning to

experts not only undermines the teachers' own expertise insofar as they themselves are the "experts" of their own classrooms, it also continues to support the medical discourse which works against inclusive education.

Teacher Attitudes and Behaviours

Jordan and Stanovich's (2004) *model of factors which predict effective outcomes in inclusive classrooms* demonstrates that the two constructs most important to the success of inclusion were teacher beliefs and school norms. These authors linked what they would consider to be *interventionist* beliefs (i.e. focusing on students' needs rather than their disabilities) and positive outcomes in the inclusive classroom. Using Stanovich and Jordan's 1998 P-I continuum, the teacher attitudes in the present study could be placed at the *pathognomonic* end of the continuum. Therefore, according to Jordan and Stanovich's (2004) model and based upon their beliefs about inclusion, the teachers in the current study may not be employing the strategies that Jordan and Stanovich described as promoting the most effective (inclusive) outcomes. Again, this is not an attempt to criticize the teachers in the study, but instead to highlight the possible effects of the structure of the special education discourse in Alberta on the attitudes and, therefore, behaviours of teachers.

Student Characteristics

Though it was not one of the goals of the present research to determine whether student characteristics influenced teacher attitudes on inclusion, the teachers in the study nevertheless provided opinions about students with different types of disabilities. Consistent with the findings of Cook, Cameron & Tankersley (2007) and Cook (2001), some of the teachers in the study mentioned their "preference" for

certain types of disabilities. For example, one of the teachers spoke in the following manner about severe disabilities and behaviour disorders:

> Sometimes, when they aren't severe, it's not so hard to deal with here. Last year, I had a student with real behaviour problems. He really acted out and disrupted the class, you know? Well, I recommended to the parents that he be put in a behaviour program where they could really help him. It was just too hard for me to deal with. Plus, I had all these other kids struggling and all my time was taken up with this one kid because of his behaviours.

This comment was chosen to represent a theme of similar comments, demonstrating that as noted in the literature, some of the teachers in the study "preferred" to teach students with certain disabilities over others.

Prior Foucauldian Research

This chapter would be incomplete without a return to the Foucauldian research that forged a path that would enable my own research methodology to emerge. The current research converges with many other Foucauldian-based studies. Similar to the teachers studied by McWilliam (2004), those interviewed in the present study showed that caring about and wanting to know their students is a "natural" part of teaching. Also reflected in this study is Gore's (1998) notion of enduring images of good teachers. This is consistent with the discourse of doing what is best for the students, as discussed above.

Skrtic's work is also very pertinent to the findings of the current study. The medical, pathologizing system of special education is very much in evidence in the

teachers' comments, and I have related this to the enduring discourse of special education which is fundamental to the Alberta policies informing teachers' work.

The teachers in Allan's (1999) study of inclusion also shared some similarities with the teachers in the present study. While Allan found that teachers were maintaining the disciplinary techniques of special education by pointing out their students' disabilities in class and thereby thwarting the students' efforts to fit in, the teachers interviewed for the current study accomplished the same task through the use of TAs. Similar to Mietola and Lahelma (2007), Graham (2006), and Graham and Slee (2008), teachers in this study were quick to identify students' differences, creating Others and upholding expert classifications of student differences. Again, I have connected these attitudes and practices with the orientations of the guiding policy documents.

Conclusions and Considerations for Future Research

One of Foucault's recommendations for undertaking research on discourse is to relate the discourse back to practice. This is what I shall endeavour to do in these concluding remarks.

First, I have problematized the concept of inclusion and demonstrated the differences in understandings of the term as articulated by the teachers in this study. Second, I have shown that teacher attitudes remain mixed; that is, somewhat positive in theory, but not as positive in practice. However, unlike other studies that have drawn similar conclusions, I have linked these attitudes and practices to Alberta's policy documents; which, although meant to support inclusion, effectively support notions of special education and exclusion that have existed since the inception of

separate schools in the mid-nineteenth century. My intention here has never been to blame teachers for negative attitudes or for practices that are not ideal for supporting inclusion. In fact, I have shown that most of the teachers in the study demonstrate attitudes that are perfectly coherent given the policy framework in which they must function—or at least no more incoherent than that policy framework.

With regard to practical implications, it would appear that a policy change would be very useful in shifting attitudes and practices toward inclusion, rather than working against it. Policy change may well provide the space that would allow a new teacher discourse to emerge, given that policy is what currently constrains the inclusion discourse and holds it within the boundaries of the special education discourse, together with all the associated discourses. For the current policy initiative in Alberta to be successful, it will be necessary to heed teachers' voices and to allow them to exercise their own knowledge without deferring to expert knowledge.

Considerations for Future Research

The use of the Foucauldian methodology has proven useful in revealing the rules of the discourse of inclusion amongst the teachers interviewed for the present research. My recommendation is for an expansion of this methodology to engage with teachers and students in the Alberta context as policies are examined and changed in the near future. A complete genealogical analysis, which was beyond the scope of this work, would further reveal historical conditions that formed the basis of current attitudes and policies. Furthermore, as Allan (2008) suggests, research that moves away from an emphasis on difference and problematizes phenomena such as inclusion

and exclusion (p. 49) may allow for new solutions to the problems plaguing inclusion, such as the disjuncture between teachers' attitudes and practices, and so on.

Conclusion

I conclude with the following quote by Foucault:

> There are more ideas on earth than intellectuals imagine. And these ideas are more active, stronger, more resistant, more passionate than "politicians" think. We have to be there at the birth of ideas, the bursting outward of their force: not in books expressing them, but in events manifesting this force, in struggles carried on around ideas, for or against them. Ideas do not rule the world. But it is because the world has ideas... that it is not passively ruled by those who are its leaders or those who would like to teach it, once and for all, what it must think." (Foucault, 1978).

Inclusion was once such an idea. My hope is that new, innovative research and practices allow it to regain its original strength and passion so that *all* students may truly know what it is to be included.

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APPENDIX A

Sample Consent Form

TEACHER CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: Inclusion Across the Lifespan

Investigator: Judy Lupart Educational Psychology (U of A)

I, _____ agree to participate in the *Inclusion Across the Lifespan* project. This project has been explained to me. I understand that I will be asked some questions regarding my student's inclusion in school and the social relationships (i.e., friends, acquaintances, etc.) he/she has in this setting. These interviews will be recorded and take about 1-1 ½ hours. My name and interview will be kept confidential. No one but the researcher and her team will know what I say. I understand that I do not have to answer any questions I don't want to. I can stop the interviews any time I want. I will keep a copy of the consent form. If I have any questions I can call (780) 492-0800. I understand that I can contact the U of A Research Ethics Board at (780) 492-3751 if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this study.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Phone: _____ Signature: _____

APPENDIX B

Sample Interview Questions

Can you just start off by telling me a little bit about yourself—your experience and your background?

Have you taught other students with special needs?

What types of disabilities have you come across in your teaching?

What strategies have you used to include (student) in the classroom?

Does (the student) use any special equipment in the classroom?

Do you feel (student) is included in the school as a whole?

Is (the student) included in the class all the time?

Do you feel that this is the best placement for (the student)?

What challenges has (the student) faced with inclusion in this school?

Are there ever conversations about disabilities in this classroom?

Do parents choose to put their kids in this class, or are they placed here?

How do you feel about inclusion? As a concept? In practice?

APPENDIX C

Teacher Letter of Information

Dear Teacher:

My name is Dr. Judy Lupart. I am a professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta. I am conducting a research project along with one co-investigator, Dr. Vianne Timmons (University of Prince Edward Island) and research assistants and graduate students who work with either myself or Dr. Timmons. We would like to invite you to participate in our study "Inclusion Across the Lifespan".

This letter is to provide information regarding our research project so that you can make an informed decision regarding your participation. The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of individuals with developmental disabilities and their "stories" to identify trends and patterns of inclusion that exist. It is hoped that the results from this study will be used to identify commonalities and variants considered as core in successful inclusive practices that can be recommended for future practice. Overall, there will be approximately 60 individuals (from both Alberta and Prince Edward Island) as well as their families and employers/teachers participating in this part of the study. A separate consent form has been sent to the child's parents and, where applicable, the individual his/herself.

If you agree to participate, the investigators or their research assistants will come to your classroom to interview you about the participant's inclusion and, at a later date, may come to your classroom to observe the inclusive practices in your class. This period of observation will in no way affect the normal routine in your classroom. In addition to the interviews and observation period, the current policies in your province will be investigated through a document analysis to compare individual experiences to what is required by these policies.

Participation in this study will involve no greater risks than those ordinarily experienced in daily life. You should be aware that even if you give your permission for participation, you are free to withdraw from this study at any time, for any reason without penalty. Results, which we will be reporting in published articles or graduate student theses will ensure complete anonymity of all participants. To maintain the anonymity of all participants, the results from individual interviews will not be made available to you, but will be included in a summary of the results in published articles. All information gathered from interviews and observations will be securely stored in a locked office and will only be accessible to those who are directly involved with this research project.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my research assistant, Angela Irvine at 492-0800, or the Office of the Vice-President (Research) at 492-5353. Two copies of the consent form are provided. Please return a signed copy, which indicates your decision concerning your participation in this research using the stamped envelope provided. The other copy can be retained for your records.